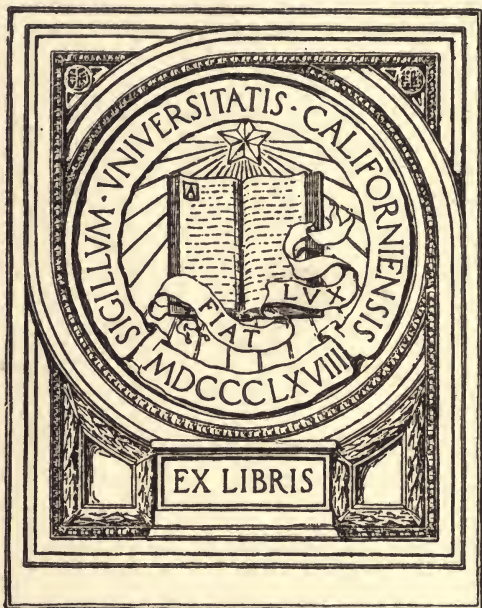


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COLLEGE COMPOSITION

BY CHARLES SEARS, BALDWIN

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COLLEGE COMPOSITION



BY

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PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC IN COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW IMPRESSION

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PREFACE

A *College Manual of Rhetoric* ventured fifteen years ago to offer a course of writing and speaking larger in scope than the work of secondary schools and definitely related to other college studies. The experiment has been amply justified. Courses of composition collegiate in degree and character, commensurate with other college courses, and constantly serving these, are now generally recognized, and their various methods have been amply tested. The present book, though proceeding from the *Manual* of 1902, endeavors to focus this intervening experience in a textbook so different in proportions as to suggest the more comprehensive title *College Composition*.

The aim of this new book being to teach, not teachers, but students, its division is not analytical into the elements of composition, but constructive into the processes of composition as they expand consecutively. College writing differs from school writing less in kind than in degree and scope. The distinction between exposition and argument, for instance, though still significant, is less important in the earlier freshman months than the order of assignments by which a student improves both in the processes demanded by higher studies. These processes are: (1) the conveying of fairly extensive information, (2) the consecutive presentation of ideas, and (3) persuasion. Information, discussion, persuasion—the three processes overlap logically; but psychologically they are a series of increasing difficulty and interest, an advance in three stages. The plan of Part I, therefore, is a simple grouping of college

problems in the order of widening experience. Similarly progressive is the grouping of the imaginative processes in Part II. The problems of diction are discussed throughout incidentally, as they arise, in relation to the larger considerations of accuracy, vividness, and movement.

The division into composition of ideas and composition of images, broached in the *College Manual* and more familiar still in French than in English criticism, is essentially the same as the classical division into rhetoric and poetic. Modern psychology, no less than ancient experience, shows it to be fundamental. Though full realization of either field demands some mastery of the other because the two are complementary, each has its own distinct technic; and transference of the counsels of the one indiscriminately to the other has led to serious confusion. A practicable technic for the imaginative experience now recognized as part of even the freshman course has not been sufficiently taught. Imaginative composition, stimulated and guided in elementary education, often fades through the higher grades, is sometimes deviated by unsound esthetic theory in the high school, and generally receives too little specific instruction in college. Its educational values for freshmen are evident both in liberating expression and in enhancing appreciation. Indeed, for any real correlation of composition to literature, it is essential. One distinct aim of this book, therefore, is to supply a more definite and progressive guide to imaginative writing, a practicable college poetic.

The new scheme of presentation has not thrown out such useful terms as unity, emphasis, coherence, periodic, etc., with which college students are familiar from their studies in school; but it further simplifies the classification, makes the apparatus entirely practical, and groups all assignments in a single appendix. Thus simple in plan and compact in

discussion, the book is intended to promote and accompany the writing and speaking of the freshman course and to open for individual students suggestions of wider range in later work.

Since I have drawn no less from the experience of many colleagues than from books, my indebtedness is too manifold to detail. I have learned most practical lore, perhaps, through the keen experiment and cooperation of my associates at Barnard during the last six years in conditions of exceptional scope and significance. My old friend Professor Chauncey Wetmore Wells of the University of California has extended in many suggestive letters and in his courses ideas that we started together at Yale, and has sounded my theory with most searching objection. From him, from Professor Hart of Wellesley, and from Professors Erskine and Briggs and Dr. Haller of Columbia, I have received the great favor of proof-reading. The most penetrative and constructive suggestions on the proof came from my former colleague Miss Esther Everett Lape, whose view of college courses has been corrected and widened by her exceptional experience in sociology and politics. My gratitude to these friends is enhanced by the certitude that they feel with me the ardor of a common quest.

C. S. B.

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COLLEGE COMPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

THE study of writing and speaking is not primarily a study of words. That it is to some extent a study of words is obvious; but that this is all is an idea of the half-educated. Finding their own words to be few and poor, they think they might become writers and speakers by acquiring a larger and better vocabulary. So soon as one discerns, however, what is meant by enlarging a vocabulary, he learns that the study of writing and speaking is not a study of words exclusively, nor even primarily. For a man's vocabulary merely reflects his experience, his actual experience in his own affairs and his vicarious experience through reading. If he has more words than ideas, he is hardly the richer; and certainly he is no nearer to being a writer. This means that the study of writing and speaking, in the larger sense, is a study of life, and that our first concern must always be what we have to say, not words but matter.

In this aspect writing and speaking are an affair, not of any one book or course, but of many courses, of all courses and all experience; in other words, of education. So, indeed, we must all study writing and speaking indirectly. But we may also study directly how to utter what we know, and the study will help us to know better. As all our studies and experience should make us better worth expressing, so this direct study should help us to express ourselves better. That seems to be the fundamental relation of art to life. Is this direct study a study of words? Yes, constantly, but incidentally. A word cannot be considered apart from

what it stands for, from the idea or the image. To find the right word, we must examine our own thought while we examine the dictionary. As we do this again and again — for we must do it as long as we live — we become both more precise and more fluent. We gain expertness and readiness with words, but not separately, nor merely by the study of words. The vocabulary grows with the man. Style, according to a familiar saying, is the man himself; and this is true not only of style in the special sense of literary distinction, but also of style in the general sense of diction.

But while diction, the use of single words and phrases, must be studied incidentally and constantly, composition, the art of putting them together, may be learned more directly, consecutively, and rapidly. Though a course in diction is hard to conceive, a course in composition is as natural and economical as it is common. Here again we must remember that what we are really composing is not words, but ideas and images. A speech is made of words — finally; but while it is in the making the speaker is arranging his ideas, and he often has the main lines determined before he chooses finally the right words. Some words, of course, he has from the beginning; he cannot think without them; but the precise words for a particular place he may select after he has arranged his ideas. He studies the order of his ideas before he studies his words. For composition, in the literal sense of putting together, is in great part distinct from diction, structure from style. The former, being usually a more definite process, can be more readily studied, practised, and learned. Thus the greater part of the positive teaching and practise of rhetoric is properly devoted to composition. A manual of rhetoric has less to teach about style than about movement.

The study of composition seeks to promote effective ordering of ideas and of images. Any given composition deals

mainly with the one, or mainly with the other. Though it may, indeed, seek both objects at once, in most cases there is at least a predominance of one over the other, and a corresponding adjustment of method. On any given occasion the main direction, the order of the whole, is gauged either, on the one hand, to convey information, impart ideas, urge action, or, on the other hand, to suggest images, stimulate perception, widen or intensify experience. So as readers we seek some books for information or ideas about life, and other books for a keener sense of life itself. So any given writer, according to his bent and habit, may be roughly classified as a writer of ideas or as a writer of images. This two-fold classification appears in the Greek division of all composition in words into rhetoric and poetic. The division is permanent because it is fundamental.

As the Greeks thus distinguished by its method a speech of Demosthenes from a drama of Sophocles, we may distinguish not only Bacon's essays from Shakspeare's plays, but *The Imitation of Christ* from *Pilgrim's Progress*, or a speech on prison reform from Dickens's *Little Dorrit*. For the two-fold division underlies a great variety of literary forms. It has no reference to details, as of prose or verse. Scott's stories, whether in prose or in verse, all alike come under the second head. Except in a few essays, Scott was always a writer of images. Indeed, the classification is not primarily of literary forms, but rather of literary method, of composition in the most general sense. In this broad sense, most prose writing and speaking may be classified either as discussion or as story.

The two-fold division underlies also the current four-fold division into *exposition*, *argument*, *description*, and *narration*. For exposition and argument on the one hand are more sharply distinguished from description and narration on the other hand than exposition is from argument, or description

from narration. It is even doubtful that we should speak of four kinds. Though exposition is often separate from argument, it is also often combined, even when the object is mainly expository; and, of course, argument is rarely possible without exposition. Moreover, the two are generally alike in method. Description has never been in practise a distinct form, and was rarely so regarded in theory until very modern times. It is more justly regarded, and will be more readily grasped, as a form of narration. The distinction between the two, being unknown either to makers of stories or to makers of dictionaries, had better be disregarded. But the difference of method between most forms of discussion and most forms of story runs through all literature.

This fundamental difference of method, not precluding combination, but determining the main course or line of presentation, is daily before our eyes. When the newspaper, which is mainly information and discussion, turns in some column to imagination, we discern a difference in the way of writing. The difference is plainer in magazines, which are rather sharply divided into essays, or discussions, and stories. Any single book is more or less distinctly either a discussion or a story, and is planned and composed accordingly. A treatise on the *Frontier in American Social Development*, dealing with the material found in Cooper's *Pioneer* or Bret Harte's *Outcasts of Poker Flat*, presents that material very differently. Even when a single work includes both kinds of writing, as a history or a biography, for instance, may be both discussion and story, one aim so predominates as to determine the plan, and the other becomes subordinate. Some histories are mainly expository; others are mainly narrative. But how exactly the two-fold division differentiates the forms of literature is another matter. Literary forms are so much less definite, so much more shifting, than

the familiar forms of other arts, that we gain little by classifying them. What we are concerned to classify for practical study is literary methods. These we see to have, whether singly or in combination, two main directions. The ways of effectiveness in discussion are different from the ways of effectiveness in story. Obviously, everybody's practical concern is with the former, with what may be called composition for business; but education, and especially higher education, is so much widened and deepened by grasp of the latter that a college manual must include both. College study needs both rhetoric and poetic. In a single work of literature the one may or may not be brought in to help the other; but each must help the other in any student's use of composition for training. Practically, then, the study of prose composition explores methods of presentation, that is of effective order, both in the field of information and discussion and in the field of imagination.

PART I. COMPOSITION OF IDEAS

CHAPTER I

INFORMATION

INFORMATION is a boast of modern times. Every one, we are wont to say, may know. What with public schools, public libraries, and, above all, newspapers, the whole world is informed. Nevertheless, in spite of all these means there obviously remains much ignorance. Everywhere information needs to be supplemented, directed, interpreted. To make people really know is still as important as it is interesting. Even as to the commonest topics of current discussion, such as the working of a gas engine, for instance, or the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine, or the organization of the National Guard, the Hague Tribunal, or the Supreme Court, many of us have little exact knowledge. No improvement in ease of communication can ever preclude the necessity of study for finding facts or for conveying them. To give, and even to receive, information must always imply search and thought. These are the tasks of the educated; and it is especially a task of college education to discern the facts and to convey them. The leadership of the educated, which is a condition of effective democracy, depends largely on such discernment and interpretation as are learned at college in laboratories, in the study of history and economics, and in various other directions of method. Composition focuses all college studies of facts, and at the same time gives them wider scope. To report on a mining property or to write a prospectus is all the more educative because it is practical. Thus composition is no less important in

the practical than in the liberal arts. Indeed, to write an item in a survey of geology or forestry or industry is worth while oftener and more largely than to write a book review. For though information is rarely an end in itself, it is a necessary means; it cannot be acquired without training; and this training, combined from various studies, is a large object in any college course.

Though a sense of fact is developed rather from many studies than from any one course, the most direct means is the study of composition. This study, having no subject matter of its own, is a complement to all other studies; for its object is to make them all more effective. By calling upon a student of engineering to present consecutively to uninformed readers what he knows about a certain type of bridge, or upon a student of New England colonial history to define the organization of the town meeting, it puts his information to the test of presentation. *Qui docet discit* is a good proverb. Such practice in acquiring discernment through facts may be, sometimes is, given separately by the instructor in engineering or in history; but in American colleges it is given generally by courses in composition. This is not because college composition can be separated from the subject matter of college studies, but simply for economy of teaching. The fundamental problems of composition, being the same for all subjects, are more readily and more consecutively studied with specialists in presentation. We are assured by the experience of many centuries that information needs to be stimulated, tested, and supplemented by presentation, and that presentation can generally be promoted best by a course which is at once separate and related to any other course. College composition, then, is an art among sciences, an instrument of all studies, a direct means of promoting grasp of knowledge and effectiveness in using it.

I. SEEKING INFORMATION

Most of the facts handled in college composition come from reading. The other obvious source, observation, though it may suggest or supplement, is rarely sufficient of itself. Observation of the management of a forest reserve, for instance, needs to be corrected, supplemented, and in part directed by the printed reports of the Forest Service and by accounts of the system followed in Germany; observation of a particular method of stage presentation, by reading about this and other methods. For college composition ought to command attention by its substance and try to show things in relation. Though the most fruitful topics, especially for preliminary practice, are those that open both observation and research, it is from the latter that we learn method for both.¹

1. Facts

The fundamental questions of research are (1) What are the facts? and (2) What do these facts mean? Though the second, of course, must wait for the first, it should always be kept in mind, and at each stage of research should be answered provisionally, by forecast to be corrected later. Otherwise the collection of facts may become miscellaneous. Apprehension of facts and interpretation of facts go hand in hand. Nevertheless the two questions are separate; and to

¹ A third approach is omitted here as generally impracticable in college, the cross-questioning of witnesses. But the lawyer's way of doing this, and the reporter's way too, though too special to be followed closely, are very suggestive in attitude and idea. Both are methods of sifting, of testing a report (1) singly, as to its precision and consistency, and (2) in connection with other reports, to bring out corroboration or contradiction. Both have the habit of asking leading questions. These ways are no less essential in research.

keep them apart, to distinguish between fact and inference, is vital to research. The investigator does, indeed, interpret provisionally as he goes along; but he does not confuse interpretation with fact. He keeps the two distinct in his mind. A fact is a past happening or a present condition, not an inference; it is single, specific in time and place, concrete, not an abstract generalization.

(1) The — Belt Lacer Company on January 1, 1910, introduced into its — department a system of profit-sharing. At the end of this year the increase of production in this department was 30 per cent. (2) The — Manufacturing Company reports for 1915 a production per workman 35 per cent. above the average in this industry for those factories which do not practise profit-sharing. Statements such as these are statements of fact. (3) Profit-sharing increases the efficiency of workmen. That is not a statement of fact; it is an inference, or generalization. An investigator may accept it as true only when he knows many more of the facts on which it is based, only when it becomes his own inference; and whether he accepts it or rejects it, he treats it as an inference, not as a statement of fact. The statements that he meantime gathers in his notes are such as (1) and (2) above.

(1) In — 1913 the employees of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company went on strike. (2) Their demands were: —. (3) The armed guards of the company did thus and so on such and such dates. (4) On — the state militia was sent in; and (5) on — it met armed resistance from the employees. Again these are typical statements of fact, of a few facts among the many to be determined in this case. But (6) the right of the company to use armed guards in certain ways, or (7) the duty of the state to intervene with the militia, or (8) the right of the employees to resist — any one of these latter is an idea; it cannot be seen, heard, reported to witnesses; it is abstract. Whether we accept it or reject it, it is not a fact. Moreover we can rightly estimate any of these ideas only when we know the facts.

A statement of fact, then, is a statement of past happening or present condition, not an inference; it is concrete, not abstract. When is such a statement to be accepted? In general, every alleged fact must be proved to be a fact by sufficient testimony; in general also, the only testimony sufficient in a given case is the best testimony obtainable in that case. This latter is a maxim of law. Thus the law demands, whenever it is possible, oral testimony by witnesses subject to cross-examination. Though cross-examination is beyond the possibilities of every-day investigation, the maxim is a sound principle. Not only law, but also the common sense of educated people, demands the verification of facts by the best tests in any given case available. No statements not thus corroborated need be accepted; no witness need be credited that does not appear reasonably careful in his observations, responsible, and free from bias and self-interest. Without challenging any one's honesty, the statements of a lumber merchant concerning material for ships may be checked by those of a steel merchant; those of a Republican concerning imports by those of a Democrat; etc. Without such checks research reaches no solid basis.

2. Collation

To attain solidity, to be sure of the facts, research proceeds by collation and by reference to authority. This sort of reading sets aside once for all that casual acceptance of current report and popular generalization which with the uneducated passes for reading. Reading, for thousands of people, means only reading the newspapers. Individuals of some education use a few books, usually such as fall in their way; but it is only the educated few who have learned to read by using a library. The effective use of a library is at the very core of higher education. Not a book, but books; not one source, but many; not transcription, but comparison; — in

some such phrase may be summed up the task of reading for information. Putting away casual acceptance and seeking verification by comparison and search for authority, a serious student can quite rapidly cultivate a sense of fact. The habitual accuracy of a well educated man is not merely care in expression; it begins with care in research, and this in turn begins with a working knowledge of a large library.

Every university or public library centers in its reference room. This is the room for the first task of research, the bringing of books together. Among the thousands of books on the shelves, perhaps a score are needed for the particular topic. Which are these? Perhaps half of them require but a few minutes and the others demand extensive reading. Which is which? The object of the reference room is to answer these questions so far as possible in advance. It is a room of guide-books to knowledge, of general books telling what special books to seek and what sort of information to expect. The special books, when brought together, will tell at need where to look further. The reference room thus invites comparison; it is devised for correcting this account by that and supplementing both with a third. Its function, then, is two-fold: first, to facilitate that preliminary survey which gives general notions and boundaries and shows how a particular investigation may be limited; secondly, to facilitate comparison on particular points. A student may save many later hours by devoting his first spare time on entering college to the exploration of the reference room, locating and glancing over the cyclopedias and bibliographies, general and special, the atlases and gazetteers, the general manuals for the subjects he is to study, and the system of the card catalogue. In this way he will be the reader, not only for college composition, but for college education as a whole. The center of every college is its library; and col-

lege education consists less in lectures and text-books and recitations than in reading and thinking.

3. Authority

The verification of facts proceeds not only by comparison, but also by seeking authority. Standard books of reference sometimes tell which accounts are accepted as authoritative; and in certain fields authority attaches to the reports of such federal bureaus as the Forest Service and the Department of Commerce and Labor, and of certain private "foundations" for more special research. All these are accessible in a large library; they are often available even for students without technical knowledge; and the use of them is a safeguard against hasty assumption or half-knowledge. They show, moreover, more extensively than most college work can do, the results of thoroughness in research and accuracy in presentation. A college essay or address must be interesting, or it is only half done; but it must be accurate, or it is badly done.

a. BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

The habit of verifying facts by collation and by seeking authority can be begun better through the use of books than through the use of periodicals. Such periodicals as are accurate and authoritative are often too technical for most students; and the popular magazines and the newspapers are generally less responsible and less well digested than books. Expert as newspapers are in collecting information, they are so much concerned with telling facts promptly and attractively that they lose something in accuracy. In magazines, too, the main object is often interest. The difficulty is not that periodicals are intentionally inaccurate, but they are so unintentionally from the necessity of haste and the occasional sacrifice of information to interest. Accurate infor-

mation must always be the main concern of a student in seeking facts. Interest he will supply himself by his own way of adapting the subject to his own audience. Periodicals are written to tell us at once what is going on now. In current matters which concern us deeply, or which are in dispute, we compare two or three accounts, checking off one by the others. Excellent practise in discrimination such comparison is most surely; but it may be very difficult. Now the author of a book has presumably done this sifting for us. At least he has had the time; at least we may expect him to have selected the most significant facts and cast aside the trivial. A book, then, is more promising as a first source of information. For the rest, we must measure it by its reputation and by comparison with other books, and in cases of dispute know what is the authority.

Not all books are superior to all periodicals. Some books are trash; some few periodicals are themselves authorities in special fields. Moreover, for certain subjects of current discussion the use of periodicals is necessary, though hardly ever the exclusive use. The point of method in seeking information from either is to verify and supplement by collation and by going back, in any disputed matter, as near as possible to authority. The legal maxim that the evidence must in every case be the best available is good for all kinds of investigation. The conveying of information lays on the educated from the beginning a moral obligation. It demands both honesty and pains.

But research is as valuable and as stimulating educationally as it is hard. College education cannot consist in receiving information already digested and interpreted. That must often suffice for people who are without college opportunities; but for college students research and interpretation are vital. There is an essential difference between learning chemistry altogether from a text-book or lectures and hav-

ing the experience of the laboratory. The facts arrived at may be the same; but what counts educationally is the process of getting them, and the process of getting them has much to do with the ability to give them. The study of the sciences has the method and the zest of exploration. Other studies, dealing more with ideas and less with facts, may keep an equal zest in different methods of research; and in every college study what counts educationally is the search. This gives a student increasing control, not only of his material, but of himself. Composition enters to stimulate and guide research by demanding it for immediate presentation. By making us tell what we know it forces us to sound our knowledge and bring it to bear.

II. GATHERING INFORMATION

Skill in bringing knowledge to bear is directly promoted by that essential of all research for composition, the comparison or collation of sources. For real profit, in composition based on reading for information, this is practically indispensable. An essay or speech based on a single source is hardly a composition; it is only a digest or paraphrase. It gives no practise in planning; for it takes the plan ready made. But the very skill sought is plan, organization, or order. Bringing knowledge to bear demands organization; and organization means arranging material in effective order. Though this is largely the task of actual composition after the material has been gathered, it begins with the research. Comparison and grouping should begin with the taking of notes, not only for the help that this gives toward the planning of a particular composition, but for the general training of investigation and interpretation. That is the kind of education proper to a large university or public library as distinct from the kind proper to a small private library.

One is for extensive reading, the other for intensive; one for information, the other for inspiration. Poring over one book from cover to cover is one kind of reading, and there is none better for its purpose; but research, being for a different purpose, demands a different habit. It demands, for real value in the final written or spoken production and, beyond that, in the student's education, that the reading be spent, not in absorbing one book, but in choosing from several. Thus, while he is taught by several teachers, the student will himself both learn and teach with better mastery.

1. Notes

Effectively to bring several books to bear in a given time on certain given points of fact is a skill so important that it should be sought at once by system in the taking of notes. For research is never mere accumulation. It always involves looking into facts for their bearing; it demands, not only reading, but thinking. Though no system of note-taking is applicable universally, and any system is likely to be modified by individual need and habit, experience has established as general rules that notes of fact, i.e. of information, should be (1) on uniform small slips, (2) brief, (3) specific as to source. Uniform small note-slips are merely an application of the modern system of card catalogue, or vertical filing, which has largely superseded, in business and in many college studies no less than in libraries, the older note-books. Notes taken in a bound book cannot be easily arranged, for either reference or composition, without being copied; and copying is a waste of time. Notes taken on cards can be readily arranged in any order desired at the time, and as readily rearranged when the order is revised. Though library cards are usually the most convenient to buy and to use, any cards or slips will answer if only they are uniform in size; for the point is simply to keep each note separate

and readily adjustable. Notes are generally best taken in lead-pencil. After the composition is written or spoken, they should be destroyed. It is rarely wise for any one to make a permanent collection of notes except in the mature studies of his profession. But during the whole process of research and composition the progressive classification of the notes should be none the less systematic.

a. QUOTATION

Next to having notes instantly available on separate slips, the most important thing is to have them brief. People who heap up notes often write before they think, sometimes write instead of thinking. Notes in themselves never made any one wise or ready. Of course, the volume of notes must depend somewhat on the subject; but in general the aim should be to keep notes down. To this end it is well to be chary of quotation. Quotations add much to the bulk of notes. They are very likely to be abandoned after further reading, or, if they are kept, to hinder expression in one's own way. And finally, they are of little use. Once in a while a point is scored by quoting authority; more often, quotation fixes a definition. Otherwise a quotation is likely to be worth no more than the fact that it contains; and that can usually be noted better and more briefly in one's own words. No serious student ought to see any value in making of himself a copying machine.

b. PARAPHRASE

Nor is research usually much furthered by paraphrase. As an exercise paraphrase, or digest, has some value in elementary training, and it has also certain specific uses;¹ but it is not generally a good way of taking notes. Generally

¹ The commonest uses are for summary of expert opinion, as in an interview or report, and for digest of correspondence, especially official correspondence.

the object of note-taking is served, not by repeating the source consecutively in its own order, but by detaching its facts for use in such order as is later found best for one's own application. There is no use in rewriting a whole article or chapter. In its own order it presumably serves its own purpose; but it contains material irrelevant to some other purpose, which in turn will demand another order, and which meantime demands the use of other sources. Instead of paraphrase, then, note-taking should be selection of such facts only as appear relevant to a particular purpose, the use of a separate slip for each separate fact, and the expression of that fact in so many words only as will serve for a clear reminder. Such note-taking is incidentally good practise in condensation, in expressing the gist. It does not obscure the bearing by superfluous words, or hamper one's own application by suggesting some one else's. More important still, it teaches discrimination between fact and inference; and it leaves the composer free, when he comes to write or speak, from any language but his own. On a subject that he really understands and feels, any intelligent person can be original if he rehandles it freely in his own words, from his own point of view, and for a definite purpose or audience. And unless it is original as a result, the composition is hardly worth while even as a task.

C. CITATION

Every note should add a citation of its source by volume and page. This is worth, in the long run, all the time it takes. It is necessary, not only for assertions open to doubt or dispute, but in general for verification and estimate of value, for responsibility in the final interpretation, and meantime for system in research. And the time of making citations may be shortened by writing out the title of each book or article once in full, on a card to be kept with similar

ones in a separate packet, and by abbreviated reference on the note-cards. For any extended discussion the title-cards will furnish the list of books, or bibliography, that is usually required. On the note-cards the citation should be made after the note rather than before, since thus the top of the card is left free for the tentative general heading which serves to classify as one reads. Thus also, when a second or third source gives the same fact, a second or third citation can be added readily to the single note, serving as confirmation. When, on the contrary, a second source disputes the assertion of the first, this dispute can as easily be indicated on the single note and becomes a reminder of the necessity of further investigation. In the comparatively few cases where a single note with its citations must run over to another card, this can be indicated by numbering those cards. By such a simple system a typical note-card looks like this:

Negro Legislators:

Increase of State Debts

Louisiana 1868, \$6,000,000; 1872, \$50,000,000

S. Carolina " 5,000,000; " 18,000,000

Burgess, Reconstruction and the Constitution, 265.

Increase in 11 states by 1872, \$131,717,778.

Dunning, Reconstruction, xiii.

d. CLASSIFICATION

The classifying headings may at first be general and tentative. As one reads further, they can be made more specific and be subdivided. For the classification, or analysis of the material, should grow with the research. Reading for information, no less than other reading, must be mixed with thinking. Before opening another book it is wise to take

account of what is gathered already, of what seems to be needed next, and in general of scope and direction. Thus one may most economically read from book to book, discarding one as superfluous or superseded, selecting another as in the right direction, finding what is relevant in a third and fourth by glancing over tables of contents or chapter-headings, passing over a fifth to use instead the sixth from which it is evidently derived. Such survey of the accumulating notes practically demands classification; but neither for this purpose of analysis nor for the final presentation need the classification be elaborate. Exhaustive treatment, of course, would demand exhaustive analysis, i.e., scientific division; but limited treatment for a particular essay or address is sufficiently analyzed by comparatively few subdivisions. Nor should there be any effort to make the headings of the notes correspond to the paragraphs of the composition. The paragraph plan, being an affair less of headings than of stages or order, had better be considered separately. All that the notes need is classification for reference.

(1) *Division*

Nevertheless even such classification has something to learn from scientific method, i.e., from logic. The headings of a logical division are: (1) exhaustive, i.e., there are no others; (2) mutually exclusive, i.e., they do not overlap; and (3) uniform, i.e., they follow a single principle. Thus Gray's large volume divides surgical anatomy into osteology, articulations, muscles and fasciæ, arteries, veins, nervous system, etc. Similarly Gray divides the nervous system into all its parts. No valid inferences concerning surgical anatomy as a whole could be based on a division that failed to take account of all its components. No valid inferences concerning the nervous system as a whole could ignore any part of that system. The safeguard against such error is to

make the division complete. But completeness is relative. Most compositions except books of reference, being limited in scope and purpose, have a logical division if they are exhaustive for that scope and that purpose. The classification of notes is sufficient if it omits nothing vital to its purpose, if it gives a fair view so far as it goes.

Moreover, even scientific division is tentative. Gray's division of surgical anatomy has been partly superseded, partly revised. More striking changes appear in the newer divisions of physiology. Much more is division flexible for such topics as college students are called on to present in human relations. In these the division has less need to be complete — if indeed it can be complete — than to be suggestive. In such subjects, and in many others, a student, since no one expects him to be exhaustive, may divide as he chooses; and his choice of headings is at once a large item in the pleasure of research and a test of his penetration and grasp. Nevertheless he cannot achieve these without strictly considering what points his limited treatment is fairly bound to cover.

The second and third logical maxims of division are obvious safeguards against confusion. If one heading overlaps another or is a part of another system, the classification breaks down. If disease were divided into (1) diseases of the nervous system, (2) fevers, (3) diseases of the intestines, etc., the whole matter would be muddled; for typhoid might be put under both (2) and (3) and perhaps also under (1). If our population be divided into Democrats, Republicans, Socialists, Pacifists, Catholics, etc., the division beginning by parties goes on by political theories and then by religion. Absurd as the error seems in such glaring cases, it is common enough to be watched for. It enters most easily, perhaps, into formal or conventional divisions, such as *political, social, and economic*. Common as this division is, it is neither ex-

haustive nor mutually exclusive, and it has not seldom led to confusion. Practically, the second and third logical maxims might be summed up by saying, See that the division is real.

(2) *Definition*

Another process involved in thinking over notes, and complementary to division, is definition. In its larger sense, definition is the interpreting of facts by generalization; in particular, it is a generalizing formula. Throughout an investigation we gradually define our ideas of the whole subject; in particular we define its important terms. In both cases we are looking for the ideas behind the facts; that is, we are trying to see the facts in relation. Classification itself involves definition; for it is the grouping of facts under ideas, and the regrouping of them as the ideas are better defined. Division and definition go hand in hand. What definition is essentially appears most clearly in the logical definition of a single term. As we all learned it from geometry, a definition is such a formula as gives both (1) the *genus* and (2) the *differentia*; i.e., both the class to which a thing belongs and the peculiarities that separate it from other members of that class, both the likeness and the difference, both the relation and the individuality.

(a) A cube is a (*genus*) polyhedron (*differentia*) bounded by six equal squares.

(b) A cathedral is a (*genus*) church (*differentia*) in which a bishop has his seat.

(c) Faith is (*genus*) certitude (*differentia*) with respect to matters in which verification is unattainable.

(d) A mayor is (*differentia*) the chief (*genus*) city official.

Long or short, every definition has these two parts.

Thus it is plain, especially from example (c), that definition is the result of a process of generalization. After much

consideration, *faith* is assigned to the class *certitude*. So "*second sight*" might be relegated by an investigator to the class *hallucination*, or *Kalmucks* to the class *Tartars*; and another investigator, or the same investigator later, might reach a different generalization, might read the reported facts differently. For even the search for information, without intent to argue, may involve dispute. Any generalization is to some extent an interpretation; and concerning the interpretation of facts there is often difference of opinion. But though a generalization may not be insisted on without being proved, it may always be suggested. The suggestion will be acceptable according to the number of facts it seems to cover and the care with which it seems to consider the *differentia*. Moreover generalization, to writer and reader alike, gives research its main value. The pleasure and profit, the education, consist not in seeing a number of facts, but in seeing through them, in discerning their relations. Composition is not mere digest; it is interpretation. A student's interpretation is not final. It is neither meant to be nor expected to be. It is valuable largely in proportion as it opens the subject to further thought. The widening of knowledge goes on largely by the progressive correction and extension of our definitions. Many definitions are approximate and temporary; but we cannot get on without them. They are necessary alike for our own thought and for our communication. They measure our progress, and promote the progress of those whom we address, in the perennial quest.

III. PRESENTING INFORMATION

Certain kinds of information are best presented in classified notes, such as statistical charts or tabular views. What can be grasped best in such analytical form will gain nothing by consecutive composition. Statistics of population or

trade, for instance, which would be tedious and confusing to hear or read consecutively, are readily comprehended from tables. Important as charts and tables are, and valuable as is the experience of using them and of making them, they may be excluded from consideration here because they do not involve composition. Instead of being consecutive, the presentation is graphic. The process properly stops with the classification of the notes.

Similarly may be ruled out all presentation that is merely enumerative, whether the enumeration be chronological as in a cyclopedia biography, or topical as in the description of a process of manufacture. In such cases the order, being intended for reference, is fixed beforehand; and fixed order precludes originality. The order can be original and vital only when the facts are to be, not merely exhibited, but explained. Interpretation is vital to any real composition; for composition enters when we try to tell not only the what, when, and where, but the how and the why. These latter questions cannot be answered by tables or enumeration. They demand consecutive order, i.e., planning by paragraphs; and this must be done afresh for each occasion. For example, not only military strategy, but geography, chemistry, and other sciences have been presented afresh over and over again in various relations to the European War of 1914. Information in this sense has to be not only faithful to the facts, but adapted to the audience, the space or time, and the occasion or particular opportunity; and without these problems of presentation composition for information has little value or interest.

1. Consecutive Plan

This means that in addition to the classification of notes, which is arrangement for reference, there must be arrangement for presentation. Though some of the headings may

be the same for both, the former will not suffice for the latter; mere classification will not suffice for presentation. Composition cannot stop with analysis; it is essentially synthesis, or building up. Analysis is mainly for the writer or speaker; synthesis, or composition, is for the reader or hearer. To be conveyed, information must be arranged, not merely under headings, but in paragraphs or stages. There must be an order that is easy to follow; and the following of information is insured by careful leading from such knowledge as the audience has, step by step, to the full realization desired. Order, the vital idea in such arrangement, means making each paragraph prepare for the next. In a word, the plan for presentation is a plan by paragraphs. Whether a paragraph shall develop one heading of the notes, or more or less, depends on the scope of the whole; but what it should always develop is one stage of progress. Whether it fits in the classification of the notes is immaterial; what is vital is that it should fit in a progressive plan of composition. Thus, though the note-headings are naturally expressed in single words or phrases, the subject of each prospective paragraph had better be expressed in a sentence; for a series of subject-sentences far better forecasts the approach and direction, the goal, and, between these two, the order that is most likely to bring out the main relations.

The interest and value of so organizing the material of the notes that a hearer or reader may follow it easily, step by step, are plain in every clear work of information. For example, Chapter II of Gifford Pinchot's *Primer of Forestry*;¹ entitled "Trees in the Forest," is arranged as follows:

Paragraph 1. Brief link to the preceding chapter.

Paragraph 2. Kinds of trees differ in their several demands for heat and moisture.

¹ Part I, "The Forest," U. S. Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, Bulletin 24, Washington, 1899.

Paragraph 3. Heat and moisture thus largely determine the distribution of whole families of trees, both over the earth in general and even within small areas.

Paragraph 4. Though heat and moisture often act together, the influence of moisture is more conspicuous.

Paragraph 5. While distribution in the large is thus determined by heat and moisture, the life of an individual tree, or even of a species, depends more on whether the tree is tolerant or intolerant, i.e., on whether it will grow well in the shade or demands much sunlight.

Paragraph 6. The importance to forestry of the demands of a tree for light is shown by many instances.

Paragraph 7. The demands of a tree for light may change with its age, its place, its health.

Paragraph 8. Which of two neighboring trees will survive may depend on the rate of growth, since the one that grows more quickly may cut off the light from the other.

Paragraph 9. Rate of growth depends on soil, which in turn depends on elevation.

Paragraph 10. Whether a species grows in groups or as scattered individuals depends (1) on whether its seed is abundant, and (2) on whether its seed is heavy or light and winged.

Paragraph 11. Thus the nature of the seed explains in general why a particular forest is pure or mixed.

Paragraph 12. But the predominance of a single species may be due also to its thriving on less heat or moisture or light than is demanded by other species.

Paragraph 13. The final factor in the struggle of trees for the ground is the vigor of a species in sprouting from stumps.

Heat, moisture, light, soil, seeds, sprouts — the question is no longer which of these should come *under* which, as in the notes, but which should come *after* which. The essence

of composition, as distinct from analysis, is order. Some aspects the reader can understand readily from his general knowledge. Begin with one of these. Some aspects he cannot understand aright until he has grasped others. Put the others first. Composing by paragraphs means beginning where the reader is, explaining what for the purpose he must know next before he can go on surely, showing how this opens another aspect, and so leading him on stage by stage to the final interpretation. If the chapter above had begun with tolerance or with sprouts, the information could not have been so readily followed. Toward attaining clearness through order the best practise is oral, the speaking of the information consecutively from a plan by paragraphs *before writing*. Oral composition will test the clearness of the plan, will show which paragraphs need further instances or illustration and where charts will serve better than words, and in general will teach adaptation to a particular audience.

2. Concrete Development

Such a plan, outlining the whole course of the composition by expressing each prospective paragraph in a sentence, shows also that presentation must be far more than formulation. The whole composition is contained in the plan — contained, but not conveyed. It is there only for the composer; for the hearer or reader each stage needs to be amplified. Division and definition in gathering material, consecutiveness in plan,—all are necessary; but all together will guide information, not impart it. The imparting must be done for each paragraph by instances, comparison, contrast, or iteration, or by any combination of these recognized means of dwelling on a point till it is understood. Instances, of course, will be supplied by the notes; comparison and contrast must be adjusted to the knowledge of the audience;

iteration is most effective at the end of a paragraph. This, in brief, is what is meant by amplification, or paragraph development. But all these means must be animated by the intention to make people see. The sentence that sums up a definition or is the subject of a paragraph stands in the composer's mind for a body of details accumulated by research and interpreted; in the reader's mind it stands as yet for nothing. It is abstract. Before he can grasp it, he must have time to turn it over in his mind, to see some of the facts that it interprets, and to consider it in the light of his own experience.

This need of fulness for comprehension controls the very diction. The terms used must be not only clear but interesting, not only precise but vivid, not only specific but concrete. Bare facts, as we call them in protest, are unsatisfying. They must be clothed, so to speak, to become visible. The facts are all in the notes, and have been verified and classified. In order to be conveyed, they have been arranged consecutively. For each stage of this arrangement there is available a fund of specific instances. Now these instances should not be merely rehearsed, not baldly enumerated, but so stated as to kindle imagination. The plan of presentation makes the reader follow; the details should make him see. Real presentation, that is, always involves more than consecutive rehearsal of the notes. If the facts are left bare, the reader is left cold.

Thus the facts of scientific investigation are, as we say in a phrase full of suggestion to the student of composition, brought home. The following paragraphs tell how a glacier lake is formed. The writer has already informed us in his preceding paragraphs: (1) that glacier lakes are widely distributed through the Sierras, (2) that their invariable arrangement in series reveals the geological history of this part of the earth's crust, and (3) how this history may be

read in instance after instance. He now brings the information home by presenting a typical case to the imagination.

When a mountain lake is born, — when, like a young eye, it first opens to the light, — it is an irregular, expressionless crescent, inclosed in banks of rock and ice, — bare, glaciated rock on the lower side, the rugged snout of a glacier on the upper. In this condition it remains for many a year, until at length, toward the end of some auspicious cluster of seasons, the glacier recedes beyond the upper margin of the basin, leaving it open from shore to shore for the first time, thousands of years after its conception beneath the glacier that excavated its basin. The landscape, cold and bare, is reflected in its pure depths; the winds ruffle its glassy surface, and the sun fills it with throbbing spangles, while its waves begin to lap and murmur around its leafless shores, — sun-spangles during the day and reflected stars at night its only flowers, the winds and the snow its only visitors. Meanwhile, the glacier continues to recede; and numerous rills, still younger than the lake itself, bring down glacier-mud, sand-grains, and pebbles, giving rise to margin-rings and plats of soil. To these fresh soil-beds comes many a waiting plant. First, a hardy carex with arching leaves and a spike of brown flowers; then, as the seasons grow warmer, and the soil-beds deeper and wider, other sedges take their appointed places; and these are joined by blue gentians, daisies, dodecatheons, violets, honeyworts, and many a lowly moss. Shrubs also hasten in time to the new gardens, — kalmia with its glossy leaves and purple flowers, the arctic willow, making soft woven carpets, together with the heathy bryanthus and cassiope, the fairest and dearest of them all. Insects now enrich the air; frogs pipe cheerily in the shallows, soon followed by the ouzel, which is the first bird to visit a glacier lake, as the sedge is the first of plants.

So the young lake grows in beauty, becoming more and more humanly lovable from century to century. Groves of aspen spring up, and hardy pines, and the Hemlock Spruce, until it is richly overshadowed and embowered. But while its shores are being enriched, the soil-beds creep out with incessant growth, contracting its area, while the lighter mud-particles deposited on the bot-

tom cause it to grow constantly shallower, until at length the last remnant of the lake vanishes, — closed forever in ripe and natural old age. And now its feeding stream goes winding on without halting through the new gardens and groves that have taken its place. — JOHN MUIR, *The Mountains of California*, Chapter VI, paragraphs ix and x.

I now understand a glacier lake because I can see it. Though I may never have seen one for myself, I have been made to see one in imagination by the writer's use of concrete terms, that is of words expressing things that I have actually seen. The facts are not merely indicated; the ideas are not merely formulated; the information is fully conveyed.

By the same concrete appeal to the imagination we are informed that a Japanese city remains, in spite of the so-called adoption of western civilization, outwardly frail, small, temporary in architecture, and quiet in habit. These facts cannot be quite conveyed to the western mind by statistics; they need to be, not merely rehearsed, but visualized.

A Japanese city is still, as it was ten centuries ago, little more than a wilderness of wooden sheds,—picturesque, indeed, as paper lanterns are, but scarcely less frail. And there is no great stir and noise anywhere—no heavy traffic, no booming and rumbling, no furious haste. In Tōkyō itself you may enjoy, if you wish, the peace of a country village. This want of visible or audible signs of the new-found force which is now menacing the markets of the West and changing the maps of the far East gives one a queer, I might even say a weird feeling. It is almost the sensation received when, after climbing through miles of silence to reach some Shintō shrine, you find voidness only and solitude,—an elfish empty little wooden structure, mouldering in shadows a thousand years old.

LAFCADIO HEARN, *The Genius of Japanese Civilization*, paragraph v; in *Kokoro: Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life*.

Information, then, is a large and fruitful task. It demands discrimination and system in research, order in pres-

entation, and that concreteness without which facts can rarely be brought to bear upon persons.

3. Current Forms of Presentation

a. SCIENTIFIC REPORTS

In the two cardinal matters of carrying the reader along by definite stages and of making him see by concrete detail, the actual current forms of presentation show instructive differences. Reports of scientific investigation, if they are addressed to experts in the particular subject, do not usually go much beyond classification. They are compressed and tabular in form, as they are technical in language, because their object is limited to clear exhibition and ready reference. Such is the report of an assay of ore, or of a chemical analysis of drinking water. In these cases a report is hardly more than a classified set of notes. But if the report is addressed to people little acquainted with the particular field of science, the presentation must always go beyond exhibition. Besides classification it must have such plan as will convey the information in effective order. Such is the report of a mining engineer to business men who wish to know whether to invest in a certain property. The more remote, miscellaneous, or inexperienced the audience, the more important and interesting are the problems of consecutive organization and concrete realization. Thus the findings of the Merchant Marine Commission in 1905 were put into such form as might enlighten, not only Congressmen unfamiliar with shipping and trade routes, but, beyond them, a large part of the public. And since this report turned out to be too bulky and too miscellaneous for the latter purpose, selected portions of its material were organized, with material from other sources, in many speeches and magazine articles composed specifically to instruct the public. The same dif-

ference in the degree of organization, or consecutiveness, according to the purpose and the audience is seen in the publications of the federal bureaus. Thus the Department of Agriculture issues both analytical or tabular reports of statistics concerning soils, seeds, fertilizers, etc., corresponding in form to a student's classified notes of research, and also consecutive essays in which the same material is organized for the comprehension of lay readers.¹

The need of concreteness, hardly less important than the need of consecutiveness, is met more and more by pictures. As the report of a mining engineer is accompanied by maps and specimens, so the Pittsburgh Survey of social conditions presents photographs. With the rapid advance in the processes of photography and reproduction facts have been brought home by pictures more and more, especially in newspapers and magazines, till it may be argued that for purposes of information there is little room left for descriptive concreteness of language. As modern scenery banished from the drama that descriptive exuberance habitual on the old bare stage, so it may seem at first thought as if for information, too, the picture had supplanted the vivid word. But a rereading of the passages above (pages 31, 32) reminds us that concreteness of language, with or without pictures, has superior carrying power. Certainly pictures should be used — and not abused — wherever they are available; and still more should diagrams. It is foolish to attempt in words anything like a ground plan or front elevation. Words can only suggest shapes; they cannot compete in this field with pictures; but their field is so much wider that descriptive concreteness, suggesting not only visual images, but sound and motion and especially emotion, can never be superseded.

¹ See above, page 27.

b. NEWS REPORTS

Descriptive concreteness is accepted as a merit in news reports, and even gives to certain newspapers a recognized distinction of style. In this aspect comparison of two news stories of the same happening is very instructive. But concreteness is more common in special stories or departments. For the ordinary run of news the account is specific, indeed, but not often concrete; it tells us where a man lives and precisely when and where he fell, but it hardly has time or space to visualize either him or his fall. In composition a news report is rather rigidly conventional. It always begins with the point, gist, or essence of the whole in its heading, supplements or slightly expands this summary in the sub-heading, tells the important aspects in the first section, begins to specify details in the second section, and so on, according to the assigned space. This plan is adapted, of course, to its particular purpose, and the execution of its parts demands technical skill; but as a whole it is too rigid to give room for composition.

Room for composition is given abundantly in supplement articles, interviews, and reviews of recent progress in commerce, finance, war, etc. For in any of these the form of the whole may be at the choice of the writer and is likely to be a main element of his success. He may stand or fall according to his plan. Is his review of the money market merely chronological? Then it will not bear comparison with one that is interpretive, still less with one that is suggestive. The outward sign and means of such arrangement of facts as lets us see through them and beyond is consecutive plan by paragraphs. Such planning should give point even to an interview without hindering free use of description and dialogue. For an extended article on an assigned topic it is

a well recognized essential, and such articles in their conditions and their demands are more nearly than any other newspaper writing like college composition; for their success depends in the same measure on skilful consecutiveness and vivid concreteness.

CHAPTER II

DISCUSSION

INTERPRETATION, which enters more or less into all conveying of information, becomes the main object in discussion. Discussion seeks less to convey facts than to bring out from them certain ideas. The difference is only in degree. There is no boundary between information and discussion; the latter is merely larger, including the former and, in the other direction extending so far as to include also argument. Discussion is thus the general term for such composition as may, on the one hand, convey information or, on the other hand, go so far as to urge action, but with or without these, and with whatever proportion of either, seeks the significance or underlying truth. We are considering here, not conversation, which has little composition and finds its peculiar value precisely in its freedom, nor debate, which on the contrary is composed rather formally, but such discussion, whether oral or written, as is uninterrupted and consecutive. Such are most newspaper editorials, most magazine articles on current topics of politics and sociology, many essays in criticism, and much of the popular exposition of science. Exposition, indeed, well describes this sort of writing and speaking if the term be used in its ordinary, general sense; but since most text-books use it in a restrictive sense that excludes argument, the field is covered better, perhaps, by the wider word discussion. College composition of this sort is most commonly related to studies in sociology, politics, and literature; but it has shown some of its best results in philosophy, and, for advanced students, it is useful also in

history and in the natural sciences. By discussion, then, we mean any consecutive writing or speaking that aims to bring out ideas and promote our grasp of truth.

I. THE TECHNIC OF PLAN AND PARAGRAPHS

To bring out ideas, composition must be more closely knit than for mere information. Interpretation, so soon as it becomes the main object, demands stricter organization. Both the whole and each of its parts need to be planned according to the logical principles of composition: unity, coherence, and emphasis.

1. Unity

Unity means having a point; it means presenting, not only details, but a whole; it means directing all the aspects chosen for presentation toward one interpretation. For the reader, unity means seeing through many things to one result; for the speaker or writer, it means interpreting many things by one idea. This idea, to which the whole composition is directed, may be a proposition, and must be so if the discussion as a whole is meant to be an argument. *Women should vote. The high-school course should provide vocational education.* Argument, that is, demands unity in its strictest form. The less argumentative the discussion, the less need to confine the whole within a single proposition; but no discussion can be consecutive without leading to a goal. Until the whole body of facts, opinions, and suggestions has been focused on a single result, until a single idea emerges from it all, the composer is not ready. He cannot expect his audience to see through what he does not yet see through for himself. He cannot discuss his subject until he knows what it all means. Indeed, he cannot be said to have found his subject until he has found his conclusion.

That the single point, or conclusion, of the whole discussion shall be reducible to a sentence, though often desirable, is not, except in argument, necessary. But precisely this is necessary, in any sort of discussion, for each paragraph. The subject of a paragraph in discussion is a sentence. This does not enforce any particular type of paragraph; still less does it hamper expression. Paragraph unity applies not to style, but to structure, not to the wording of the finished form, but to the planning of a distinct stage of thought. It means fixing attention on one thing at a time. That each paragraph shall have a single point necessitates, for purposes of discussion, that each paragraph shall be controlled by a definite sentence.

2. Coherence

For this strict unity of each paragraph is a condition of consecutiveness in the whole composition. It focuses attention for the purpose of guiding thought. In order to follow the progress, the reader must know just where he is at each stage. We progress in discussion, not merely from topic to topic, but from proposition to proposition. An idea, being an inference or interpretation, cannot be defined unmistakably by any form of words short of a sentence. What discussion seeks is a progress of ideas. Thus in discussion the subject of a paragraph must be a sentence because the plan of the whole must be a series of sentences; and *vice versa*, for the rule works both ways. Paragraph unity is less an end in itself than a means to the coherence of the whole.

Thus to say that discussion demands stricter coherence amounts practically to saying that it demands stricter paragraphs. The advance from the conveying of information to that further interpretation which is involved in the building up of ideas is marked by the higher organization of paragraphs. The paragraph, always a unit of composition, a

definite part, becomes in discussion more strictly a part in a certain place. As the whole depends more on consecutiveness of plan, each part will be adjusted more carefully to its place in that plan. The more argumentative the discussion, the more strictly each paragraph must be adjusted as a stage or step in the logical progress, a link in a chain; but any sort of consecutive discussion, however informal or popular its diction, demands logical organization of paragraphs.

Coherence, then, which means in general leading a hearer or reader from where he is now to where you wish him to arrive, means technically three things: (1) planning by paragraphs, (2) regulating each paragraph by a definite proposition, (3) adjusting each paragraph to fit. The first is prospective and general. Any composition in this field is thus blocked out in the composer's mind before it is spoken or written at all. A paragraph is primarily not a group of sentences, but an idea or thought which is to be developed in a certain connection. The second is retrospective. After the paragraph has been sketched, whether orally or in writing, its unity is tested by seeing whether it obeys a single controlling sentence, that is whether it fills its place. The test will reveal both the soundness of the paragraph and the soundness of the whole plan, each in relation to the other. The third process is the final revision. It consists in making the relation of each paragraph explicit, that is in seeing that the connection is marked by sufficient connectives.

a. PLANNING BY PARAGRAPHS

Huxley's popular lecture entitled *A Piece of Chalk*¹ aimed to give its hearers a sense of geologic time. Its unifying idea is to teach us how to read in the successive layers of the earth's crust geologic history. This idea, though it is not

¹ Published 1868, in *Lay Sermons, Addresses and Reviews*.

embodied in a single proposition for proof, may be summed as follows: *Scientific analysis of chalk shows that the crust of the earth was formed, layer by layer, through ages.* There is the goal, the point at which the audience is to arrive. By what stages? That is the first question of coherence. From Huxley's finished exposition it is easy to see clearly, though without his notes for speaking we cannot, of course, represent precisely, how the lecture was planned in advance. The earlier stages were to set forth the common occurrence of chalk, first right there, under the feet of the audience, then more widely in England, and then throughout large portions of Europe and Asia. What is this chalk? The questions thus provoked were to be answered by the next stages: first, by simple chemical analysis showing that chalk is carbonate of lime, then by simple physical analysis showing that it is largely composed of *globigerinae*. But what are *globigerinae*? Again the question provoked was to be answered by careful stages. These tiny deposits were to be shown as the result, not of inorganic processes such as crystallization, but of organic life. Here ends the first chapter, or section. The rest of the exposition was evidently planned just as clearly by paragraphs. From beginning to end the lecturer planned definite stages by which his hearers were to advance farther and farther until they realized the desired significance.

Coherence consists essentially in choosing a starting-point within the experience and ideas of the audience and leading from those ideas to others and yet others, steadily widening the view until it commands the whole desired outlook. Huxley literally began where his audience was. "If a well were sunk," he says, "at our feet in the midst of the city of Norwich, the diggers would very soon find themselves at work in that white substance, almost too soft to be called rock, with which we are all familiar as 'chalk.'" His last

paragraph contains the following passage, which in itself almost describes what is essential in coherence:

A small beginning has led us to a great ending. If I were to put the bit of chalk with which we started into the hot but obscure flame of burning hydrogen, it would presently shine like the sun. It seems to me that this physical metamorphosis is no false image of what has been the result of our subjecting it to a jet of fervent, though nowise brilliant, thought to-night. It has become luminous, and its clear rays, penetrating the abyss of the remote past, have brought within our ken some stages of the evolution of the earth.

Coherence, then, means taking hold aright and going on until the audience is led to the goal. A very good example of progressive plan for this purpose is the Areopagus address of St. Paul as outlined in Acts xvii. 22-31.

b. REGULATING EACH PARAGRAPH BY A SENTENCE

Analysis of any systematic exposition, whatever the subject, will reveal a similar prospective plan for coherence. When the discussion has been developed orally on these lines, or written out in a first draft, the coherence may be tested by summing up each paragraph in a sentence. Huxley's lecture as it appears in print¹ shows that the following sentences, expressed or implied, underlie the paragraphs:

Huxley's A Piece of Chalk, Plan by Paragraphs

1. Chalk enters into the composition of many counties of England.
2. It occurs also throughout large parts of Europe and Asia.
3. It is widely recognizable in geological contours, especially of cliffs and mountains.
4. Thus analysis of chalk will reveal much of the composition of the earth and much of its physical history.

¹ In some reprints of this lecture the paragraphs are blurred by false spacing.

5. Chemically chalk is carbonate of lime.
6. Carbonate of lime is familiar in a variety of forms: limestones, stalactites, the "fur" in a kettle, etc.
7. Physically chalk is composed of granules and other bodies.
8. The other bodies show a calcareous fabric, of which the commonest form is called *globigerina*.
9. *Globigerinae* seem from their form to be products, not of mineral aggregation, but of vital activity.
10. That they are actually animal organisms has been shown by the fact that the mud brought from the bottom of the ocean often contains exactly similar skeletons.
11. The specimens that proved this were brought up by those soundings for the first Atlantic cable which gave us a survey of the ocean bottom.
12. The mud of the ocean bottom analyzed chemically is found to be largely carbonate of lime; analyzed physically, to contain innumerable *globigerinae*.
13. This animal organism, though of the simplest, has a distinct and unmistakable skeleton.
14. Further analysis and scientific inference show that these creatures live and die where they are found, at the bottom of the sea.
15. Therefore chalk is the dried mud of an ancient deep sea.
16. The theory that chalk and deep-sea mud are physically identical is confirmed by the presence in both of coccoliths and coccospheres.
17. This theory, like the theory of the origin of the pyramids, is confirmed by collateral evidence.
18. Such collateral evidence is the presence in chalk cliffs of the fossils of shellfish known to be confined to the sea.
19. These fossils and others give us some idea of the time required to form the chalky mud.

The remaining paragraphs (20-33) show the same distinct stages and the same steady coherence. Such an analysis of the finished work, paragraph by paragraph, constitutes a faithful account of the logical progress and reveals the

studious care for coherence. But it is still more useful as applied to one's own rough draft in order to revise both the unity of each paragraph and the coherence of the whole. Thus applied, it is at once the simplest and the most practical means of revision. That a given stage, for instance, as worked out demands two paragraphs instead of the one foreseen, or that on the contrary it turns out to be, not really a stage, but only a link, the regulating of each paragraph by a sentence will show clearly; that is, it will determine the actual paragraphs as different in some cases from those that were foreseen.

C. ADJUSTING EACH PARAGRAPH TO FIT

Thus it is practically prerequisite to the final revision, which consists in making the connection explicit by words of reference. The connection must be there before it can be shown in words; but that it needs to be shown is clear from the care taken by experienced writers with their connectives. Huxley's adjustments can be seen in the following analysis of the opening and the close of each of his first ten paragraphs:

Huxley's A Piece of Chalk, Adjustments at the Opening and the Close of Paragraphs

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Chalk enters into the composition of many counties of England.</p> | <p>1. "If a well were sunk at our feet in the midst of the city of Norwich, the diggers would very soon find themselves at work in that white substance, almost too soft to be called rock, with which we are all familiar as 'chalk' (<i>introduction</i>). Not only here, but over the whole county of Norfolk, the well-sinker might carry his shaft down many hundred feet without coming to the end of the chalk (<i>partial announcement of the paragraph</i>)</p> |
|--|--|

subject, expanded in the succeeding sentences). . . . it enters into the very foundation of all the south-eastern countries (*paragraph close*)."

2. Chalk occurs also throughout large parts of Europe and Asia.

2. "Attaining, as it does in some places, a thickness of more than a thousand feet, the English chalk must be admitted to be a mass of considerable magnitude (*link*). Nevertheless it covers but an insignificant portion of the whole area occupied by the chalk formation of the globe (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . the area of which would . . . exceed that of the largest existing inland sea — the Mediterranean (*paragraph close*)."

3. Chalk is widely recognizable in geological contours, especially of cliffs and mountains.

3. "Thus the chalk is no unimportant element in the masonry of the earth's crust (*link*), and it impresses a peculiar stamp . . . on the scenery (*announcement of the paragraph subject*) . . . chalk has its share in the formation of some of the most venerable of mountain ranges, such as the Lebanon (*paragraph close*)."

4. Thus analysis of chalk will reveal much of the composition of the earth and much of its physical history.

4. "What is this wide-spread component of the surface of the earth, and whence did it come? You may think this no very hopeful inquiry. You may not unnaturally suppose that the attempt to solve such problems as these can lead to no result save that of entangling the inquirer in vague speculations, incapable of refutation and of verification. If such were really the case, I should have selected some other subject than a piece of chalk for my discourse. But in truth, after much deliberation, I

have been unable to think of any topic which would so well enable me to lead you to see how solid is the foundation upon which some of the most startling conclusions of physical science rest (*link*). A great chapter of the history of the world is written in the chalk (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . I propose that we now set to work to spell that story out together (*paragraph close*)."

5. Chemically chalk is carbonate of lime.

5. "We all know that if we 'burn' chalk the result is quicklime. Chalk, in fact, is a compound of carbonic acid gas and lime (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . chalk is almost wholly composed of 'carbonate of lime' (*paragraph close*)."

6. Carbonate of lime is familiar in a variety of forms: limestones, stalactites, the "fur" in a kettle, etc.

6. "It is desirable for us to start from the knowledge of this fact, though it may not seem to help us very far towards what we seek (*link*). For carbonate of lime is a widely spread substance and is met with under very various conditions (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . for anything chemistry tells us to the contrary, the chalk might be a kind of fur upon the bottom of the earth-kettle, which is kept pretty hot below (*paragraph close*)."

7. Physically chalk is composed of granules and other bodies.

7. "Let us try another method of making the chalk tell us its own history (*link, two simple physical experiments described*). . . . The general mass of it is made up of very minute granules; but, imbedded in this matrix are innumerable bodies (*announcement of the*

paragraph subject). . . . A cubic inch of some specimens of chalk may contain hundreds of thousands of these bodies, compacted together with incalculable millions of the granules (*paragraph close*)."

8. The other bodies show a calcareous fabric, of which the commonest form is called *globigerina*.

8. "The examination of a transparent slice gives a good notion of the manner in which the components of the chalk are arranged and of their relative proportions. But by rubbing up some chalk with a brush in water (*link, referring to the experiments of the preceding paragraph and introducing a new one*) . . . each of the rounded bodies may be proved to be a beautifully constructed calcareous fabric (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . One of the commonest . . . is called *globigerina*, and some specimens of chalk consist of little else than *globigerinae* and granules (*paragraph close*)."

9. *Globigerinae* seem from their form to be products, not of mineral aggregation, but of vital activity.

9. "Let us fix our attention upon the *globigerina*. It is the spoor of the game we are tracking. If we can learn what it is and what are the conditions of its existence, we shall see our way to the origin and past history of the chalk (*link*). A suggestion which may naturally enough present itself is that these curious bodies are the result of some process of aggregation (*negative statement of the subject; what it is not*). . . . *Globigerina* is not the product of anything but vital activity (*paragraph close*)."

10. That they are actually animal organisms has been shown by

10. "Happily, however, better evidence in proof of the organic nature of the *globigerinae* than that of analogy is

the fact that the mud brought from the bottom of the ocean often contains exactly similar skeletons and the living creatures themselves whose skeletons will in turn go to form this mud.

forthcoming (*link*). It so happens that calcareous skeletons, exactly similar to the *globigerinae* of the chalk, are being formed at the present moment by minute living creatures which flourish in multitudes, literally more numerous than the sands of the sea-shore, over a large extent of that part of the earth's surface which is covered by the ocean (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . those able microscopists found that this deep-sea mud was almost entirely composed of the skeletons of living organisms — the greater proportion of these being just like the *globigerinae* already known to occur in the chalk (*paragraph close*)."

Similar adjustment of each paragraph to its place in the sequence will be found throughout the rest of Huxley's lecture and in any other well knit discussion, for instance in the *Epistle to the Romans*. It is clear in Cardinal Newman's lecture on *Literature*.¹

- Section 3 of Newman's *Literature*,
Adjustment at the Opening and the Close of Paragraphs

1. Literature, though the derivation of the word implies writing, is habitually discussed in terms of speaking.

2. The habit arises from the fact that litera- 2. "Now I insist on this because it shows (*link*) that speech, and therefore

¹ The second of Newman's *Lectures and Essays on University Subjects* comprises pages 268-294 in *The Idea of a University* (Longmans, Green & Co.) The analysis above is of the opening paragraphs of section 3.

ture is essentially personal.

3. The personal, subjective use of language distinguishes literature from science.

4. Literary expression, then, is personal expression.

literature, which is its personal record, is essentially a personal work (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . In other words, literature expresses, not objective truth, as it is called, but subjective; not things, but thoughts (*paragraph close*)."

3. "Now this doctrine will become clearer by considering another use of words, which does relate to objective truth, or to things; which relates to matters not personal, not subjective to the individual, but which, even were there no individual to know them or to talk about them, would exist still (*link*). Such objects become the matter of science (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . Science, then, has to do with things, literature with thoughts; science is universal, literature is personal; science uses words merely as symbols, but literature uses language in its full compass, as including phraseology, idiom, style, composition, rhythm, eloquence, and whatever other properties are included in it (*paragraph close*)."

4. "Let us then put aside the scientific use of words when we are to speak of language and literature (*link*). Literature is the personal use or exercise of language. That this is so is further proved from the fact that one author uses it so differently from another (*announcement of the paragraph subject*). . . . His thought and feeling are personal, and so his language is personal (*paragraph close*)."

The agreement of these two lectures, and of other discussions as different from them in subject and style as they are from each other, is in general method of adjusting paragraphs, not in any set pattern. That the reference of each paragraph to the preceding should be explicit does not mean that it should be formal. On the contrary, connectives are so various that there is no excuse for harping on one kind; and discussion itself is so flexible that there is no need of securing consecutiveness by formality. The style of the connectives should be the style of the whole discussion, more or less formal according to circumstances. In general, connectives are explicit and expanded in proportion as the discussion is oral and argumentative. Thus the most explicit and formal transitions are heard in debate. Discussions less oral and less argumentative than Huxley's and Newman's have simpler connectives; but even Huxley's paragraph openings vary all the way from the omission of the link in paragraph 5 to the expansion of it through more than a hundred words in paragraph 4. In general also, connective reference is made either briefly by demonstratives (*this, thus, here, etc.*) or conjunctions (*therefore, but, nevertheless, etc.*), or more extensively by repetition of significant words or phrases from the preceding paragraph. These means offer variety enough to make formality quite unnecessary.

3. Emphasis

a. ITERATION

But various and adaptable as are the connective openings of paragraphs, one means is used so often and so widely as to be evidently fundamental. Whether the discussion be lecture or essay, criticism or plea, in proportion as its consecutiveness is strong the opening of each paragraph will show the connection by repeating at least one significant word or phrase from the close of the preceding. More than

b. PROPORTION

So far, we have been considering paragraphs simply as logical frames, as skeletons. Emphasis, however, obviously means not only iteration, but development; not only stress, but space. In how many paragraphs shall a given aspect of the subject be developed? This is a question of proportion. Proportionally, the answer is, to the importance of its bearing on the aim of the whole discussion. To further another aim, the proportions would be different. Theoretically, then, the emphasis due to a given aspect depends on the unity of the whole; practically the due emphasis will be discovered in the course of working out the plan by paragraphs. Huxley must have decided generally in advance how much space to give for his purpose to the discoveries of deep-sea dredging; but he can hardly have known exactly until he saw how much was demanded for coherence by the actual working out of the paragraphs. The space given to a particular point will be forecast in relation to the unifying idea of the whole; it will be corrected by working out the paragraphs.

c. AMPLIFICATION

This actual working out of the paragraphs means the due development of each paragraph. The question of development is not only how far, but how. How is a paragraph developed? To know that it must have an underlying proposition and that this unifying idea is generally iterated at the close is only to know its frame, not its substance. The analyses at pages 42-49 above give little more than a series of propositions; and a series of propositions never moved any one. To be brought home, each idea must be worked out. Emphasis in this aspect is fulness; and it is the necessary complement to unity. For paragraph unity is practical, not merely as restricting the discussion to one

idea at a time, but as giving room by this restriction for bringing out the one idea fully. Within the limits of unity a paragraph may thus be developed, not only by iteration, but by instances, by comparison, by contrast, by proof. Whether one of these methods be used, or two, or all five, is less important than that, by whatever method, the idea be emphasized fully. In fact, these methods are but different aspects of the general need (page 30) of the specific and concrete. Discussion will be organized to no avail unless it is brought home.

In the passage below from Hearn's *Genius of Japanese Civilization*, paragraphs 8 and 9, the opening of section III, are developed by the simple and obvious method of instances. Paragraph 14, the opening of section IV, is developed at first by illustration, by a comparison drawn from physics, and in the latter part by contrast. The following paragraph (15) applies this contrast argumentatively; i.e., it is developed by proof, by generalizing from instances and comparisons not merely to explain the proposition, but to establish it.

8. Generally speaking, we construct for endurance, the Japanese for impermanency. Few things for common use are made in Japan with a view to durability. The straw sandals worn out and replaced at each stage of a journey; the robe consisting of a few simple widths loosely stitched together for wearing, and unstitched again for washing; the fresh chopsticks served to each guest at a hotel; the light *shoji* frames serving at once for windows and walls, and repapered twice a year; the mattings renewed every autumn, — all these are but random examples of countless small things in daily life that illustrate the national contentment with impermanency.

9. What is the story of a common Japanese dwelling? Leaving my home in the morning, I observe, as I pass the corner of the next street crossing mine, some men setting up bamboo poles on a vacant

lot there. Returning after five hours' absence, I find on the same lot the skeleton of a two-story house. Next forenoon I see that the walls are nearly finished already, — mud and wattles. By sundown the roof has been completely tiled. On the following morning I observe that the mattings have been put down, and the inside plastering has been finished. In five days the house is completed. This, of course, is a cheap building; a fine one would take much longer to put up and finish. But Japanese cities are for the most part composed of such common buildings. They are as cheap as they are simple. . . .

14. Now it is worth while to inquire if there be not some compensatory value attaching to this impermanency and this smallness in the national life. Nothing is more characteristic of that life than its extreme fluidity. The Japanese population represents a medium whose particles are in perpetual circulation. The motion is in itself peculiar. It is larger and more eccentric than the motion of Occidental populations, though feebler between points. It is also much more natural, — so natural that it could not exist in Western civilization. The relative mobility of a European population and the Japanese population might be expressed by a comparison between certain high velocities of vibration and certain low ones. But the high velocities would represent, in such a comparison, the consequence of artificial force applied; the slower vibrations would not. And this difference of kind would mean more than surface indications could announce. In one sense, Americans may be right in thinking themselves great travelers. In another, they are certainly wrong; the man of the people in America cannot compare, as a traveler, with the man of the people in Japan. And of course, in considering relative mobility of populations, one must consider chiefly the great masses, the workers, — not merely the small class of wealth. In their own country, the Japanese are the greatest travelers of any civilized people. They are the greatest travelers because, even in a land composed mainly of mountain chains, they recognize no obstacles to travel. The Japanese who travels most is not the man who needs railways or steamers to carry him.

15. Now, with us, the common worker is incomparably less free than the common worker in Japan. He is less free because of the

more complicated mechanism of Occidental societies, whose forces tend to agglomeration and solid integration. He is less free because the social and industrial machinery on which he must depend reshapes him to its own particular requirements, and always so as to evolve some special and artificial capacity at the cost of other inherent capacity. He is less free because he must live at a standard making it impossible for him to win financial independence by mere thrift. To achieve any such independence, he must possess exceptional character and exceptional faculties greater than those of thousands of exceptional competitors equally eager to escape from the same thralldom. In brief, then, he is less independent because the special character of his civilization numbs his natural power to live without the help of machinery or large capital. To live thus artificially means to lose, sooner or later, the power of independent movement. Before a Western man can move he has many things to consider. Before a Japanese moves he has nothing to consider. He simply leaves the place he dislikes, and goes to the place he wishes, without any trouble. There is nothing to prevent him. Poverty is not an obstacle, but a stimulus. Impedimenta he has none, or only such as he can dispose of in a few minutes. Distances have no significance for him. Nature has given him perfect feet that can spring him over fifty miles a day without pain; a stomach whose chemistry can extract ample nourishment from food on which no European could live; and a constitution that scorns heat, cold, and damp alike, because still unimpaired by unhealthy clothing, by superfluous comforts, by the habit of seeking warmth from grates and stoves, and by the habit of wearing leather shoes.

The technic of discussion, then, may be summed up practically as follows: (1) *fixing one point*, or issue (unity of the whole); (2) *taking hold*, or beginning where the audience can take hold, and *going on* (coherence) by definite stages (paragraph unity); (3) *bringing home*, or concreteness and fulness in the development of each paragraph (emphasis).

II. THE TECHNIC OF REVISION IN DETAIL

1. Revision of Sentences¹

The study of composition has been seen to be primarily a study of the ways of putting thoughts together. It is concerned first with the thinking out and ordering of the whole, then with the adjustment of the paragraphs. But the whole having been planned by paragraphs, and each paragraph having been adjusted as a definite stage of progress, every one needs to revise his sentences and words in order to make what he says conform in every part to what he means.

Good paragraphs come mainly from prevision; but good sentences come from revision. The way to learn clearness and force of sentence-form is to rewrite. For it is both hard and unprofitable to think of sentence-form during the writing of the first draft. The important thing then is to put a statement where it belongs, not to put it in a certain form. During the first writing, therefore, instead of hesitating over the form of a sentence, one should compose as fast and as freely as possible with mind bent on the thought of the paragraph. Only when the paragraph is at last a group of sentences should the separate sentences be revised.

So in speaking, the first consideration is to keep on. If in the middle of a sentence the speaker thinks of a better form, he had better finish the sentence nevertheless as he began it. If he stops in order to start it differently, he tends to annoy and confuse his hearers and to lose his thread. Keeping on to the end of the paragraph, he can then go back to revise if he is practising alone; if he is speaking in public, he can only remember the weak sentence, to avoid that kind in the future.

It is precisely because speaking gives less opportunity for

¹ This section is adapted from the author's *Writing and Speaking*.

revision that sentence-form must be studied mainly through writing. We all expect of writing more careful, more deliberate sentences. We assume that a writer has settled on just the form he intends. We expect him to revise. Now every time he revises he grooves deeper a channel of good habit. The sentences of his first drafts become clearer and stronger because he has thus, as it were, grooved straighter channels for his thought. He speaks in better sentences because he has revised his writing; and for the same reason he writes better sentences before revising than as a beginner he wrote after revising. But the most expert writers never cease to revise their sentences. More corrections of this kind are made in printers' proofs than of any other kind. All experience, therefore, makes plain that in matters of sentence-structure the way to learn to write is to rewrite.

a. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN SENTENCE-FORM

The revision of any sentence has to solve one of two problems, and sometimes both: (1) to make the sentence clear by itself; (2) to make it strong in support of its neighbors. The first is mainly a matter of syntax. The application of grammar to composition is so to frame each sentence that a hearer or reader can follow it instantly. This familiar application may be summed up in four general rules for revision:

- (1) A sentence must stick to one plan throughout.
- (2) Modifiers must be brought near to the parts that they modify.
- (3) Complex sentences should show the main thought in the main clause.

They arrived finally at Ellis Island, when they found that the father could not be examined that night.

This sentence is upside down. Its meaning is brought out by proper subordination.

When they arrived finally at Ellis Island, they found that the father could not be examined that night.

Look out for such loose *when* additions.

(4) Compound sentences that do not intend real coordination should be made complex by subordination of one member. Improper compound sentences, sentences in which the parts are coordinate in form though one of them is subordinate in meaning, arise sometimes from haste. They are quite pardonable in a first draft. But they arise also from thinking loosely. To recognize them and correct them is an exercise not so much in writing as in thinking. It is a sign of intellectual growth. Children habitually speak in such loose compound sentences because they are not old enough to subordinate one idea to another. And in this the childhood of a language is like the childhood of a man. The earlier prose writing of any nation is full of such loose compound sentences, because the language has not yet grown up to fine logical distinctions. In children and in old prose we expect this. It is natural. But as the prose of a people grows with the people's intellectual life, it makes larger and larger use of complex sentences. So it should be with your own writing. Slowly, but surely, you ought to revise such a compound sentence as this,

Brutus did not know human nature, and his speech failed.
to a complex sentence,

The speech of Brutus failed because he did not know human nature.

For it is a sign of intellectual growth to subordinate in form what is subordinate in thought.¹

¹ For a summary of punctuation in its bearings on syntax see Appendix B.

**b. EMPHASIS IN SENTENCE-FORM: PUTTING THE
RIGHT WORD AT THE END**

The second problem for revision is to make each sentence strong in support of its neighbors. This is a problem, not of grammar, but of rhetoric; for, as the word *strong* implies, it involves the principle of emphasis. As emphasis is given to a paragraph by giving prominence to its main idea, so emphasis is given to a sentence by giving prominence to its main word. This is felt most clearly in speaking. The following sentences express each thought in two different forms. Which of the pair is easier to stress properly with the voice?

I

(1) The first thing that strikes us is the lack of scenery in this reproduction of the Elizabethan stage.

(2) The first thing that strikes us in this reproduction of the Elizabethan stage is the lack of scenery.

II

(1) The captain's absolute power sometimes led to petty tyranny in the old days of sailing vessels, according to Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*.

(2) According to Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*, the captain's absolute power in the old days of sailing vessels sometimes led to petty tyranny.

III

(1) The idea of the Forest Service is to have lumbering economically done, not to prevent lumbering.

(2) The idea of the Forest Service is, not that lumbering should be prevented, but that it should be done economically.

In each pair the second is easier to speak because the voice falls with less effort on the main word; for the main word stands at the end. Since the voice naturally falls at the end, since that is the natural place of stress and pause,

the best economy is to put there the word or phrase that you wish to emphasize. If, instead, you leave at the end some less important part, you cannot stress the word you wish to stress without slighting the close. The close then sounds feeble. It does not satisfy the ear. Sentence emphasis means, Put the right word at the end.

(1) *Ending with the most Important Word of the Sentence*

But which is the "right" word? Which is the "main" word? In every sentence, considered by itself, some words carry more of the thought of the sentence than others. In the examples above, such words are: I. *lack of scenery*, II. *tyranny*, III. *economically done . . . prevent*. The object of the sentence is to make these words stand out so conspicuously that the hearer or reader cannot miss them. These, therefore, are the "right" words to put at the end. And when, as in III. above, two such words are compared or contrasted, the revision of the sentence must take care, (1) that the contrast shall be brought out by parallel form, and (2) that the more important of the two shall come last. In a word, end the sentence with its point. The point of I. is *lack of scenery*. To put the phrase *in this reproduction*, etc., after it is to defeat emphasis in speaking or ease in reading, to deceive the ear or the eye. The point of II. is *tyranny*. To hide it in the middle is to make the whole sentence lag. The point of III. is *done economically*. First, the two contrasted ideas, *prevented* and *done economically*, are made parallel in form in order to bring out the contrast; secondly, the negative one is put first in order to end the sentence positively. The right word, then, to put at the end of the sentence is the word that carries the main thought or point.

Sentence emphasis is often defeated by superfluous addition.

So with trees; their needs are different according to the different varieties *that we find*.

The italicized clause adds nothing to the sense. It merely blunts the end of the sentence, making the voice linger after the point. Emphasis is thus defeated by redundancy. For compactness and directness, the sentence should be revised to read:

So the needs of trees differ according to their varieties.

The following is another instance of emphasis defeated by redundancy.

Even when the game is a very exciting one, the spectators may find their patience tried by waiting on account of accidents that happen in the course of the game.

Here any one can see that the repetition of *game* is unnecessary. Repetition emphasizes; and here it emphasizes the very word of the whole sentence which should not be emphasized. To emphasize the wrong word is quite as bad as not to emphasize the right one. The remedy sometimes proposed is to avoid repetition by substituting for *game* some synonym — say *contest* or *struggle*. But this change does not in the least improve the emphasis. It does not even remove, but merely covers, the false repetition. In all such cases the remedy is to change, not the word, but the construction. In the sentence above the revision is quite simple. The whole final clause, like the one in the sentence preceding, is superfluous. An *accident* is necessarily something *that happens*; and of course it happens *in the course of the game*. By the omission of this whole clause the sentence ends with the right word, *accidents*. Further, a *very exciting one* means no more than *very exciting*. All such a . . . one combinations are redundant. Finally, *patience tried* is

sufficiently implied by *waiting*. The revised form, then, would be:

Even a very exciting game may weary the spectators by the waits for occasional accidents.

Redundancy, therefore, though it may be corrected sometimes by omitting superfluous words, demands in other cases the recasting of the whole sentence.

(2) *Ending with the Important Word for the Paragraph*

But the principle of ending positively with the word or phrase that carries the thought will not always suffice if a sentence be regarded entirely by itself.

(1) The marvelous promptness of a fire company is due to the precision of its drill.

(2) The precision of drill gives a fire company marvelous promptness.

Which form is better? One sounds and looks as effective as the other. Evidently the important words are *promptness* and *precision of drill*; but which is the more important? No one can decide from the sentence taken by itself. But any one can decide by the relation of that sentence to the paragraph. Suppose that it is the opening sentence of a paragraph, that the paragraph deals with the fire drill, and that the preceding paragraph has developed by instances a fire company's marvelous promptness. At once the choice falls on form (1); for this form by putting *promptness* first would link with the preceding paragraph, and by putting *drill* last would emphasize the subject of the present paragraph. Suppose, on the other hand, that the preceding paragraph has shown the precision of drill, and that the present paragraph shows how this results in marvelous promptness. At once, for the same reasons, the choice falls on (2). And sentences in the body of the paragraph can

often be adjusted by the same principle: *emphasize at the end of a sentence that part which is most important for carrying on the thought of the paragraph.* The "main" word or phrase, the "right" part to make stand out, is that part which is most important for the progress of the paragraph.

The revision of a sentence for emphasis, then, is determined, not only by the point of that sentence, but also by its relation to its paragraph. The object of revision is to adjust a sentence to its context, to make it fit. For somewhat as the emphasis of a paragraph helps the coherence of the whole (page 51), so the emphasis of a sentence may help the coherence of the paragraph.

Compare the following by reading them aloud:

The first cause of the spirit of independence in the American Colonies is their English descent.

(1)

First, the descendants of Englishmen settled the colonies. Freedom, Sir, was formerly adored in England, and is still respected, I hope. The colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most predominant, and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hand. Liberty according to English ideas and on English principles, therefore, not mere liberty in general, is the idea to which they are devoted. Abstract liberty is not to be found any more than any other mere abstractions. Some sensible object must be the test of liberty, etc.

(2)

First, the people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen. England, Sir, is a nation which still, I hope, respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most predominant, and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore devoted, not only to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas and on English principles. Abstract

liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object, etc.

— BURKE, *Speech on Conciliation with America*.

In the first form above, the difficulty of bringing out the line of thought is due to the difficulty of stressing the right word, even of knowing which word to stress; in the second, the form written by Burke, all this difficulty is smoothed away by careful sentence emphasis. The voice falls naturally on the important words, because these words stand at the end. Yet hardly a word is changed otherwise. The whole difference in paragraph coherence is due to sentence emphasis.

(a) EXPLICIT REFERENCE BY REPETITION OR DEMONSTRATIVES

Thus the practise of beginning a paragraph with its subject, linked to the preceding paragraph by repetition of an important clause, and of ending a paragraph with an iteration (pages 45–49), to be taken up in turn as the link of the next paragraph, — all this may be applied also to sentences. But it should be applied to sentences less strictly. It is useful sometimes, not always. For there is no need of linking every sentence as we link every paragraph. Not every sentence carries the thought forward. Some must give pause for iteration; some must bring in instances or illustrations. Otherwise we should go ahead too fast. Otherwise speaking and writing would be reduced to mere argumentative outline, dry bones without meat. Now these frequent sentences of instance, illustration, or iteration often need no link at all. Their connection is plain enough without. And the link, even when one is desirable, need not always be a link of repetition. It may be simply a conjunction (*but, nevertheless, besides, etc.*) or a demonstrative (*here, there, thus, this, those, etc.*). Care in the choice of such link-words is an important part of precision. To at-

tempt linking by repetition of an emphatic close in all cases would make composition mechanical and tiresome, or even impossible.

In the following passage, the linking of sentences through the repetition of an emphatic close or otherwise is indicated, wherever it occurs, by italics.

Jane Addams on Filial Relations,¹ Analysis of Paragraphs IX and XIII to Show the Adjustment of Sentence to Sentence

Paragraph IX

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Partial announcement of the paragraph subject.</p> | <p>1. "Our democracy is making inroads upon the family, the oldest of human institutions, and a claim is being advanced which in a certain sense is larger than the family <i>claim</i>."</p> |
| <p>2. Second sentence linked to the first by repetition.</p> | <p>2. "The <i>claim</i> of the state in time of war has long been recognized, so that in its name the family has given up sons and husbands and even the fathers of little children."</p> |
| <p>3. Linked to 2 by repetition and demonstrative.</p> | <p>3. "If we can once see the <i>claims</i> of society in any <i>such</i> light, if its misery and need can be made clear and urged as an explicit claim, as the state urges its claims in the time of danger, then for the first time the daughter who desires to minister to that need will be <i>recognized</i> as acting conscientiously."</p> |
| <p>4. Linked to 3 by demonstrative and repetition.</p> | <p>4. "<i>This recognition</i> may easily come first through the emotions, and may be admitted as a response to pity and mercy long before it is formulated and perceived by the intellect."</p> |

¹From *Democracy and Social Ethics*, New York, the Macmillan Company, 1914.

Paragraph XIII

1. Partial announcement of the paragraph subject.

2. Expansion of 1 without explicit link.

3. Linked to 2 by demonstrative.

4. Expansion of 3 without explicit link.

5. Further expansion of 3 without explicit link.

6. Linked to 3, 4, and 5 by conjunction, demonstrative, and repetition.

7. Linked to 6 by repetition.

1. "It is always difficult for the family to regard the daughter otherwise than as a family possession.

2. "From her babyhood she has been the charm and grace of the household, and it is hard to think of her as an integral part of the social order, hard to believe that she has duties outside of the family, to the state and to society in the larger sense.

3. "*This* assumption that the daughter is solely an inspiration and refinement to the family itself and its own immediate circle, that her delicacy and polish are but outward symbols of her father's protection and prosperity, worked very smoothly for the most part so long as her education was in line with it.

4. "When there was absolutely no recognition of the entity of woman's life beyond the family, when the outside claims upon her were still wholly unrecognized, the situation was simple, and the finishing school harmoniously and elegantly answered all requirements.

5. "She was fitted to grace the fire-side and to add luster to that social circle which her parents selected for her.

6. "*But this family assumption* has been notably broken into, and *educational* ideas no longer fit it.

7. "*Modern education recognizes* woman quite apart from family or society claims, and gives her the training which

for many years has been deemed successful for highly developing a man's individuality and freeing his powers for independent action.

8. Linked to 7 by less formal repetition within the sentence, not at the beginning.

9. Linked to 8 in the same way as 8 to 7.

8. "Perplexities often occur when the daughter returns from college and finds that *this recognition* has been but partially *accomplished*."

9. "When she attempts to act upon the assumption of its *accomplishment*, she finds herself jarring upon ideals which are so entwined with filial piety, so rooted in the tenderest affections of which the human heart is capable, that both daughter and parents are shocked and startled when they discover what is happening, and they scarcely venture to analyze the situation."

10. Summary of the result, or point of the whole paragraph, without explicit reference to 9.

11. Final iteration, with explicit reference to 10 by repetition, as of 8 to 7.

10. "The ideal for the education of woman has changed under the pressure of a *new claim*."

11. "The family has responded to the extent of granting the education, but they are jealous of the *new claim* and assert the family claim as over against it."

In the passage above an emphatic word is repeated at the beginning of the next sentence only when such linking seems important. In other cases the emphatic word is repeated less conspicuously within the sentence; in still others sufficient connection is made by taking up the same idea in other words. Macaulay, whose effects depend less on sequence, is usually quite careless of these means of paragraph coherence. Sometimes his paragraphs are quite abrupt, the

sentences standing almost detached save for an occasional *and* or *but*; sometimes the connection is managed entirely by sentence emphasis. Burke not only repeats oftener, but usually repeats the very word, because his composition proceeds more logically. For this device is more useful in argument, and most useful in argument that is spoken. In written essays, though it is often of great service, it is generally less important.

(b) INTRODUCTORY "AND"

We sometimes hear that *and* should not be used to begin a sentence. Though this cannot be urged as a rule of correctness, it is on the whole good advice. Only the real offender is not the *and*; it is the construction. Good writers use *and* at the beginning of a sentence; but they use it seldom, because the connection between their sentences is usually more definite. If sentence follows sentence through a passage of any length with no more definite relation than can be expressed by *and*, the thought must be loose or the composition hasty. *And* should be used only when it is really meant; and it should not be meant too often. A further objection is that no one can use *and* often to begin a sentence without confusing the distinction between a sentence and a clause. There will be no marked difference between what he writes as separate sentences and what he writes as coordinate clauses. For the sake of clear thinking, therefore, first see whether the *and*-sentence should not be a clause; secondly, if it is really a sentence, see whether it should not have a more precise connective.¹

¹ Of the other coordinating conjunctions, *however* and *also* are seldom used by good writers to begin a sentence. They stand within. Still others, as *moreover*, may stand in either position.

(3) *Adjusting the Length of Sentences in Relation to the Paragraph*

This opens also the question of sentence-length, or rather of the number of sentences in a given paragraph. The two paragraphs following, approximately equal in number of words, are conspicuously different in number of sentences, the first having three, the second eighteen.

For my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all, as the general scandal of my profession, the natural course of my studies, the indifference of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion, — neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another, — yet in despite hereof I dare, without usurpation, assume the honourable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font, my education, or the clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my unwary understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my country; but having in my riper years and confirmed judgment seen and examined all, I find myself obliged, by the principles of grace and the law of mine own reason, to embrace no other name but this. Neither doth herein my zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity as rather to hate than pity Turks, infidels, and (what is worse) Jews; rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

— SIR THOMAS BROWNE, *Religio Medici*.

What is the hardest task in the world? To think. I would put myself in the attitude to look in the eye an abstract truth, and I cannot. I blench and withdraw on this side and on that. I seem to know what he meant who said, No man can see God face to face and live. For example, a man explores the basis of civil government. Let him intend his mind without respite, without rest, in one direction. His best heed long time avails him nothing. Yet thoughts are flitting before him. We all but apprehend, we dimly

forebode the truth. We say, I will walk abroad, and the truth will take form and clearness to me. We go forth, but cannot find it. It seems as if we needed only the stillness and composed attitude of the library to seize the thought. But we come in, and are as far from it as at first. Then, in a moment and unannounced, the truth appears. A certain wandering light appears, and is the distinction, the principle, we wanted. But the oracle comes because we had previously laid siege to the shrine. It seems as if the law of the intellect resembled that law of nature by which we now inspire, now expire the breath; by which the heart now draws in, then hurls out the blood, — the law of undulation. So you must labour with your brains, and now you must forbear your activity and see what the great Soul showeth. — EMERSON, *Intellect*.

At first glance the difference between these two extreme cases seems to be in style. The effect of the first is sustained and smooth; of the second, staccato and abrupt. And the difference is not merely in the presence or absence of explicit reference; it lies mainly in the predominance of long or of short sentences. Further, the paragraph of long sentences has the easier flow because of a habit of subordination, of combining as clauses such statements as the second paragraph leaves separate in sentences. Obviously also, either extreme leads to monotony. Since monotony of style means monotony in sentence-form, variety in length is an end in itself. In this aspect both these paragraphs err, though in opposite directions.

But the problem goes deeper than sound. In thought both these paragraphs are difficult; the one because the relation of statements is so complicated as to tax attention, the other because the relation is not expressed at all. To careful reading the first is much the clearer as a whole; with due attention we arrive at the goal certainly. The second is so far from explicit as to leave the drift mainly to the reader. In any attempt to express the relations of these detached

statements each to each by subordination and explicit reference no two readers will exactly agree. It is Emerson's way, not to convey ideas, but to provoke them. He deliberately ignores coherence, preferring to throw out detached suggestions for the reader to interpret as he can. The same habit is seen to a lesser degree in Carlyle, who says somewhere, "I hate to see a set of propositions hanging on to one another's skirts." This method of suggestion, though it has its value undoubtedly, will not serve most purposes of discussion. If we are to make ourselves quite clear, though we should not go to Sir Thomas Browne's length, we must generally follow his method of subordination.

The question is not simply, then, Long sentences, or short? If it were, we should always prefer the short. Nor is it ever a question of a single sentence. It is not, Shall I make this sentence long, or short? A sentence must be as long as its meaning demands; and this demand is determined by its place in the development of the paragraph. The real question, then, is this: Shall I leave these two statements standing side by side as separate sentences, or shall I combine them by making one of them a clause? In elucidating the idea of the paragraph do they make two points, or only one? Does this second one bear on the subject of the paragraph directly, or does it bear indirectly through its relation to the first? In the former case, being independent, it is a sentence; in the latter, being dependent, it is a clause. Such practise in reducing to clauses statements written hastily in the first draft as sentences is a direct means of overcoming a habit of redundancies; but its value goes beyond conciseness. It is another means of making sentence-form serve the coherence and emphasis of the paragraph.

(4) *Sentence-forms Generally Emphatic*

Balanced Sentences.—Though sentence emphasis is best secured in each case by revising the sentence to fit that particular place, this revision will show that two sentence-forms are emphatic generally. These two forms are recognized, therefore, by technical names: (1) the *balance*, or balanced sentence; (2) the *period*, or periodic sentence. The balance is very commonly an emphatic form for compound sentences. As its name implies, it is a compound sentence whose parts are made alike in form.

(1) In the ordinary high school a boy gets all his education with his head; but in the manual-training high school his hands also come into play.

(2) In the ordinary high school a boy gets all his education with his head; but in the manual-training high school he gets part of it with his hands.

The second form is plainly the more emphatic. Indeed, the first shows its weakness as soon as it is spoken. In attempting to stress *hands* one has to slur the end of the sentence. But why stress *hands*? Evidently because it is contrasted with *head*. The contrast in thought is most easily brought out by a likeness in form, i.e., by a balance.

(1) The United States has prospered during a long period of protection; but under free trade the same period in England has been one of prosperity.

(2) The United States has prospered during a long period of protection; but England has prospered during the same period with free trade.

Here the emphasis desired to bring out the parallel between *protection* and *free trade* is defeated in (1) by placing these main words in different positions, and gained in (2) by placing them in the same position. A compound sentence of comparison or contrast is usually made emphatic by balance.

The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works; but the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive.

— MACAULAY, *Life of Samuel Johnson*.

This is simply a wider application of the rule for correlatives. It applies to the whole sentence what we have all learned about parallel parts.

(1) They succeeded neither by land nor sea.

(2) They succeeded neither by land nor *by* sea.

(1) A countenance more in sorrow than anger.

(2) "A countenance more in sorrow than *in* anger."

(1) Either he attempted too much or chose incapable officers.

(2) He either attempted too much or chose incapable officers.

(1) He both amazed his native town by his theories and his practises.

(2) He amazed his native town both by his theories and by his practises.

In all these cases the second form is the one that we expect. Most of us are fond enough of balance to feel in the first form something lacking or something crooked. When a speaker or writer sets out to express a parallel we expect him to express it exactly. If he leaves it not quite ship-shape, we are annoyed. Therefore it is a rule, almost as binding as a rule of syntax, that correlative phrases and clauses shall be exactly alike in form. The same principle may be applied to a whole compound sentence; but this application is less binding. Here it is no longer a rule of correctness, but a useful means of emphasis. As applied to a whole sentence, it is often advantageous; as applied to minor parts, it is necessary.

Periodic Sentences. — The period, or periodic sentence, is very commonly an emphatic form for complex sentences. In general, a periodic sentence follows the principle of emphasis by putting the main clause last. It puts first all the

subordinate clauses, all the conditions, exceptions, or other modifiers of its main idea, in order to end with the point. Thus a period is a sentence suspended up to its close. Instead of making an assertion and then modifying it, the periodic sentence makes no assertion at all until all the modifiers are in. It is a sentence left incomplete up to its period. It does not end until the last word. A period, then, is a sentence so formed that up to its last word its syntax is incomplete.

(1. *unperiodic*) We shall be swamped if we attempt those rapids with our canoe so heavily laden.

(2. *periodic*) If we attempt those rapids with our canoe so heavily laden, we shall be swamped.

(1. *unperiodic*) We may as well signal the boat, since we have missed that train.

(2. *periodic*) Since we have missed that train, we may as well signal the boat.

(1. *unperiodic*) He advanced very near under cover of the dense forest, so that the enemy had no escape.

(2. *periodic*) He advanced so near under cover of the dense forest that the enemy had no escape.

Sometimes in an oratorical summary the period holds the syntax in suspense at considerable length.

If, then, the removal of this spirit of American liberty be for the greater part, or rather entirely, impracticable; if the ideas of criminal process be inapplicable, or, if applicable, are in the highest degree inexpedient; what way yet remains?

— BURKE, *On Conciliation with America*.

And yet he, who was generally the haughtiest and most irritable of mankind, who was but too prompt to resent anything which looked like a slight on the part of a purse-proud bookseller or of a noble and powerful patron, bore patiently from mendicants, who, but for his bounty, must have gone to the workhouse, insults more

provoking than those for which he had knocked down Osborne and bidden defiance to Chesterfield. — MACAULAY, *Samuel Johnson*.

But the main use of the periodic form is in such shorter sentences as the following, from the same essay of Macaulay:

Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed sloven. Being often very hungry when he sat down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness.

The periodic form is naturally adapted to such sentences of result. Though in conversation we might say, *He was overtired, so that he took cold*, in writing we should revise to the more precise form, *He was so overtired that he took cold*. The two are alike brief; but what the former gives in two pieces the latter gives in one. The same is true for concessive clauses and, to a lesser degree, for other subordinate clauses, in short complex sentences. Emphasis is usually served by putting first the *if*- or *though*- or *since*-clause. But the main consideration is always, not to write a certain pattern of sentence, but to bring out the right word. Where the emphasis, as sometimes happens, should fall on the subordinate clause, the periodic form would be false.

These and other aspects of sentence emphasis may be studied in the following well known passage:

MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION: If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object, and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.

I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, North as well as South. — LINCOLN, Opening of the *Springfield Speech*, 1858.

In the last sentence above, notice first that the periodic suspense is kept by using correlatives. *Either* keeps us waiting for *or*. But this sentence is not periodic as a whole. The syntax is completed at the word *forward*. Then another clause is added, *till . . . states*; then a phrase, *old as well as new*; and finally another phrase, *North as well as South*. Such adding of phrases and clauses often makes a sentence weak by making it trail through a succession of afterthoughts. But these are not afterthoughts; they are part of the first plan. Lincoln meant from the beginning to put them there. Why? Because each addition enforces the thought, carries it forward, expands it, and finally drives it home. As the sentence goes on, it increases in force. Such a plan of increasing force, without suspense, is sometimes called *climax*, from the Greek word meaning a ladder. Climax is not a distinct sentence-form; it is merely an application of the general principle of emphasis; but it exhibits the principle in an aspect worth formulating. *A strong sentence goes uphill; a weak sentence goes downhill.*

2. Revision of Words¹

As sentences are settled by revision, so also are words. Pausing for exactly the right word during the process of composition, like pausing to shape a sentence, may be a

¹ Some passages in this section are adapted from the author's *Writing and Speaking*.

serious interruption. Conversely, revision must take time to substitute for the approximate words of the first draft those which are (1) correct, (2) precise, and at need also (3) concrete. All this takes time because it demands choice among several words, sometimes among many. For the right word is the word that best conveys the particular meaning. The general meaning is conveyed more or less by a whole group of words called synonyms. To some extent the meaning will be conveyed by any of them; but one, better than all the others, will usually be found to convey the particular intention. It is the task of revision to seek this exact word.

a. USAGE

Obviously the word chosen must be correct in the sense of being accepted, of being for that meaning in good use. If it is not accepted in the desired sense, it will not serve the primary purpose of communication; it will not convey the intended meaning surely. A word is chosen primarily, that is, from the point of view of hearers or readers. The meaning must be conveyed in such terms as hearers or readers, whatever may be the private preference of the speaker or writer, generally accept. To choose otherwise is to distract attention and even to run the risk of being misunderstood. For speech is primarily social; and usage, or good use, is simply social habit in speech.

According to the admirable summary of Dr. Campbell,¹ good use is (1) reputable use, (2) national use, (3) present use. Negatively this means that consideration of social habit precludes such use of a word as is (1) disreputable, not used by speakers and writers of reputation; or (2) local, confined to some section, trade, or profession, not used

¹ George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (first published in 1776), Book II, chapter i.

throughout the country; or (3) either past or future, not accepted now. Dr. Campbell meant that a word, or a use of a word, to be correct must have, not one of these marks, but all three. Present use may be incorrect because it is disreputable or local; a use once reputable, or somewhere reputable, may be incorrect because it is not present or not national. A use definitely past no one will attempt to revive except in humor or affectation. What raises question is use that is not past, but passing. Here writers may properly differ; that is, the decision is partly the affair of individual taste. In diction one is either reactionary or radical at his peril; but he may quite decently be either conservative or progressive.

The most conspicuous violation of good use is slang. Expression that is at once local and loose, in so far as it becomes a habit, reflects and confirms a tendency toward local and loose thinking. As by Gresham's law of money, the inferior currency seems to drive the superior out of circulation. To this extent slang, instead of widening one's diction, tends to narrow and stunt it. The cheap immediate effect upon a few acquaintances is gained at some sacrifice of growth into wider command of language. For freedom is promoted less by incorrectness than by correctness. Freedom comes ultimately from control of a wide range. Width of vocabulary, of course, cannot be achieved by study of words. It comes slowly through experience, through the study of things and of ideas. But an important part of this wider study is the conscious effort to make one's expression convey one's thought truly and surely. That is the real task in the choice of words. It is a task of revision; and it is hindered, not helped, by temporary makeshifts.

What slang seeks is force. The intentional use of it is for directness of appeal. Now directness may for the present be summed up as concreteness (pages 30, 53); and slang

is usually concrete, often even figurative. So far, so good. But usage never restricts concreteness. Instead of repeating the slang figure, dulled already by much vague application, one may always find a concrete expression that is both accepted and more particularly significant. Not only may he do so, but the oftener he does, the wider will he open the resources of language in homely force. To seek one's own concrete term, one's own figure, instead of making shift with the shopworn cant of the music-hall and the street, is again to promote expressiveness.

Some of the raciest of concrete expressions are among our old homely idioms and proverbs. A foreigner, a man not nurtured in our speech, may easily master English so far as to avoid solecisms; but idiom, homely familiarity, demands longer and deeper acquaintance. Meantime he has no resource for familiarity of phrase except slang. The feebleness of expression in the speech of foreigners ought to warn us against trusting slang for force. Their weakness is from lack of intimacy. That is precisely the weakness that no man should permit himself in his own tongue. Not to know the custom of the country is perpetually to risk being found in bad taste; but not to know the custom of one's own country is to be in bad taste. Bad taste may, indeed, have a certain force; but it forfeits the force that carries beyond the coterie and the day, that is felt by all of kindred speech.

It is significant that slang is generally confined to conversation. In print it does not often occur outside of stories, where it generally represents the speech of a character, not of the writer. Slang in an editorial, a magazine article, or a review is quite unusual. Even in spoken address slang is comparatively rare, heard only in very popular and familiar appeal. Consecutive discussion, that is, whether oral or written, generally makes little use of slang. There is, however, some general difference in usage between speech and writ-

ing. The diction of writing is more careful and more conservative. Written use pays more heed to the tradition, or history, of the language; spoken use, to its constant change. Though spoken use thus demands consideration, one should remember that his own spoken use is constantly forming habits, that carelessness in pronunciation and other points of usage at least hinders correctness, precision, and force in writing. With this caution he should both consult dictionaries and listen to the educated speech about him.

For a language is at once a tradition and a development. Most words in any language are full of the past; they have histories, and the history of each word gives it certain associations which make it more or less apt to express a given shade of meaning. Thus regard for tradition helps to make one's use of words both more exact and more suggestive. But as the use of a word has changed, so it is still changing. A language is never fixed till it is dead. Such regard for tradition as forbids a new use after it has become general is contrary to a manifest tendency of language. It is therefore an illusion, besides being a hindrance to freedom of communication. On the other hand, if the natural desire for free communication leads to impatient disregard of tradition and to the seizing of new uses before they become current, one's diction, as has been seen, tends to become poor and vague. Either extreme is a restriction. A full use of language demands both study of its tradition in books and attentive observation of how educated people are actually talking.

For study of words the reference book is the dictionary. The function of a dictionary is to record in the form most convenient for reference all such information about words as will guide a discriminating use. Such information includes: (1) spelling, (2) pronunciation, (3) general meaning, (4) particular meanings, i.e., synonyms and various applica-

tions, (5) derivation, or origin, (6) history, or successive applications, (7) examples, i.e., quotations of passages showing the application of a word by its context. Of these the first three are supplied by every dictionary, the others in degrees varying according to the size and scope of the particular work. To consult the dictionary only for the first three items is to blunder with tools. Revision, to be adequate to the particular occasion, still more to promote control of expression, must go farther. Though there is no need to explore all the aspects of a word in every case, there is need to explore enough for a choice. Every professional writer has several dictionaries at his desk, and uses them all. Every student needs for his own exclusive use a dictionary large enough to include, at least summarily, the first five items above. He needs further convenient access to those large dictionaries which include all aspects of every word. The more one writes, the more he will use dictionaries.

As to usage, no less than to other aspects of language, the function of a dictionary is merely to record, not to legislate. Its office is to say, not "This word shall be used in such and such senses"; but "This word is used with the following meanings now. The eighteenth-century use to mean so-and-so is now so far obsolescent as hardly to appear outside of verse. The application to so-and-so has not yet been recognized by good authors." The dictionary is there to tell us, never what should be, but sometimes what has been, sometimes what seems about to be, always and above all what is.

Thus faithfully and impersonally to reflect usage is a task both large and hard; and harder than for French or Italian is the task for English. To determine in a doubtful case the use accepted generally by educated speakers of English is difficult both because of the wide diffusion of the language and because of the English temper of individualism. No

one city holds for English the place of Athens for ancient Greek or of Paris for modern French. In the United States social eminence is not marked by habitual respect for national use; nor is this use reflected for the mass of the people by either the newspapers or the stage. Moreover, the consentient use of men of letters everywhere, of writers and scholars whose preeminence has been recognized, is sometimes blurred by the innovations of individuals. A writer of English race has generally taken more liberties with his mother tongue than a writer of Latin race. The freedom of English has led some scholars even to deny the reality of an English good use. Finding in every use of English the scientific interest of unconscious changes according to physical tendencies and of conscious changes according to social tendencies, they question the authority by which any one use is made superior to the others. But it remains true in English, only less than in some other languages, that the effect alike of popular lapse and of the innovation of individuals is always checked, and sometimes counteracted, by conservative custom. This custom, the consensus of those whose knowledge of the language and skill in its use give them professional assurance, does in fact rule the mass of writers, and is in fact generally recorded in dictionaries. For being less uniform and less conservative, the authority of usage in English is less strong, indeed, but not less real.

Difficulty or doubt as to usage after all is rare. Our dictionaries of to-day are so much truer to their function and so much sounder in scholarship than some compiled in the last century, and they are so frequently revised, that no one need be often in doubt for lack of authoritative record. For correction or confirmation the dictionary is quite adequate to ordinary need. As to the acquiring of good use, that, in language as in other social intercourse, is by good breeding and good company. A man may be correct

without scientific scholarship. Even the converse is possible, that a man may have much science in his language without habitual correctness. And the cultivation of correctness, the conscious refining of speech, progresses not more by consultation of dictionaries than by listening and by reading.

b. PRECISION

Attention to usage means more than conformity. It is the first step toward a larger end, precision. Usage is no more important for sureness of communication in a given case than for a habit of exactness. As vagueness is usually risked in the use of slang, so recourse to a dictionary for correctness makes one aware of synonyms, and so leads to discrimination. Every choice of a particular word from its group of synonyms is an exercise of thought and promotes truth of expression. To choose a word is to distinguish an idea from a group of related ideas; that is, to sound one's intention. In this way revision clarifies thinking; and the habitual use of a dictionary leads quite beyond social habit to individual grasp.

For language is not a set of fixed symbols, each corresponding to one thing, idea, emotion, or action, and to no other. Almost any common idea is represented by several, perhaps many, words; and of these words some apply also to other ideas. A word once applied to one idea has been gradually extended to another; or conversely, a word once applied to a whole class has come to be limited to a single thing. Again, an idea, as it is developed in new aspects, associates to itself other words. So language grows; and so our words are not merely single signs with no other connection, but rather groups clustering about a central idea of which each emphasizes some one part or aspect more than another. So precision comes from choosing out of a group the word that most nearly expresses the desired shade of

meaning. And the constant overlapping of groups, though at first it increases the labor of choice, also increases its profit. From among the many words that surround an idea, that one must be chosen which comes nearest to the particular application desired; and this choosing of the right word for the particular place (1) gives the word a new sharpness in the mind, (2) adds other words to the vocabulary, and so (3) broadens the whole idea.

The magnitude of the vocabulary surrounding any common general idea can hardly be appreciated without a glance at such works as Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* or March's *Thesaurus Dictionary of the English Language*. Their object is, instead of separating words according to their particular applications, to group them according to their general meanings. Such groups, though at first sight discouraging, should rather be stimulating. They are compiled, not to be learned entire, but to be chosen from. No man's vocabulary ever included more than a small fraction of the dictionary; but every man's vocabulary needs the dictionary to define and to broaden his thinking.

C. CONCRETENESS

It is evident from any group of synonyms that words differ in extent of meaning, some being more general, others more specific. Precision, of course, demands the most specific word applicable to the given case. But of two synonyms equally specific one may be more concrete, i.e., more suggestive of such physical sensations as sound, motion, touch, etc. By more directly evoking images these are more vivid. In defining an idea or in generalizing about it our words must be abstract; in illustrating it and bringing it home they should be concrete (page 53). Abstract terms such as *opacity* and *irritability* are necessary for definition,

and for such formulation they are sufficient; for full presentation we need such concrete words as *murky* and *grumble*. Concrete words, though less extensive, are more intensive. They usually have more associations; they are, as we say, richer. For this very reason they may not by themselves be sufficient for precision; but they are none the less necessary for appealing to the imagination. To imagine the idea at work, to have it called up before the mental vision in definite images, is very helpful toward understanding it, is even sometimes necessary. Just as the idea of a paragraph must be developed by instances and illustrations, so in detail the choice of words must consider not only precision, but also concreteness.

During his sickness the public consternation was expressed in the habits of the citizens; and their idleness and despondency occasioned a general scarcity in the capital of the East. — GIBBON, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter XLIII.

This statement of what was felt during the illness of the emperor Justinian is bare and cold because, though precise, it is entirely abstract. The facts can be brought home only by being imagined as sounds, gestures, attitudes, actions, looks, and expressed in corresponding concrete terms of physical sensations. What did men do? How did they look? Furthermore, the meaning of a word includes both its denotation, specific meaning, or definition, and its connotation, concrete associations, or imagery. Care for the one is precision; care for the other, concreteness. For further discussion of concreteness see Chapter IV. i. 3.

III. TYPICAL FORMS OF ESSAY ¹

Various forms of discussion in literature are grouped generally under the term essay. Of all literary forms essay is the least definite. The word means merely a trial, or sketch; and the thing has varied in form from Bacon to Addison, and from Lamb to Macaulay. Really the term covers more than one literary form; but it can be divided more surely after taking account of its general meaning. Vague though it is, it nevertheless represents a certain general attitude of mind and method of writing. First, essays of all kinds deal, however variously, with ideas. Their common goal is less to suggest or represent life as it comes to us through our five senses than to comment on life, to explain its underlying principles, to set forth the writer's ideas. However specific and concrete it may sometimes be in detail, its goal is some general, abstract idea, some principle or proposition, in a word, some idea. "Men fear death," says Bacon at the beginning of an essay, "as children fear to go in the dark." This is an idea, a thought, a reasoning from experience. His little essay on *Death*, though it has concrete instances, is planned to set forth certain ideas. So each of Emerson's essays, abundant though some of them are in concrete descriptive detail, sets forth certain ideas concerning *Friendship*, or *Books*, or *Eloquence*, etc. Each has for its goal something abstract and general, not a reflection of life as in a story or play, but a reflection on life. Lowell's essay *On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners* begins with anecdote and abounds in description; but its purpose is to enforce upon the reader his reflections, his ideas, concerning the attitude of foreigners toward our country. Many of Addison's essays, especially the De Coverley papers, are very largely

¹ From the author's *Writing and Speaking*.

descriptive; but they are habitually led from, or led up to, an abstract idea which serves as a text, or proposition for the whole. Number 107 begins: "The reception, manner of attendance, undisturbed freedom and quiet, which I meet with here in the country have confirmed me in the opinion I always had that the general corruption of manners in servants is owing to the conduct of masters." Number 110 passes from the haunted walk near Sir Roger's house to the general belief in ghosts. Number 112 begins: "I am always very well pleased with a country Sunday, and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind." Of course critical essays, such as Macaulay's, are evidently devoted to the developing of ideas. In general, then, an essay is a discussion of ideas.

This being the object of an essay, its method is generally by paragraphs, as in a speech. As to its form, indeed, an essay might roughly be called a speech in writing; for both proceed generally by paragraphs. The difference between the two is the difference between persuasion and exposition. True, either speech or essay may persuade, and either may expound; but when our main object is persuasion we prefer to speak if we can, and when the main object is explanation we prefer to write. So with the audience. If we are to be stirred, we had rather hear; if we are above all to understand clearly, we had rather read, had rather, as we say, have the thing in black and white. We may revise our general definition, therefore, by calling an essay an exposition of ideas. For the object of an essay is usually more than enumeration of parts, more than statement of facts. An essay aims from the parts to interpret the whole, from the facts to show the underlying principle. An essay proceeds by paragraphs because it is a process of thought.

Finally, then, an essay may be defined as an exposition by paragraphs of a single controlling idea.

1. The Two Kinds of Essay

On the basis of this definition, essays may be divided into two classes, according as they follow the paragraph method of exposition more or less strictly. When the author's main concern is the underlying idea and the leading of other people to accept it, he casts his essay in the stricter way of exposition by definite, carefully emphasized paragraphs. His paragraphs, though they may be less full, are as definite as those of a speech, and, as in a speech, they are arranged in progressive, logical order. When, on the other hand, the author cares more to show his idea concretely as he sees it at work in life, when, instead of developing it by definite stages, he is content to suggest it, when in other words his aim is rather to interest his readers in it than to reason it out with them, — then he casts his essay in a looser form. His paragraphs are not so clear-cut as the paragraphs of a speech; for some of them are largely descriptive, and the whole essay has less logical progress. Both classes of essays deal with ideas; but the one reasons them out in a series of expository paragraphs, and the other partly reasons them out and partly suggests them by description. Thus we may divide essays, according to their method of composition, into stricter and looser; and the ear-mark is the handling of the paragraph.

The stricter, expository type is clear in Bacon, our first great essayist and still among our greatest.

OF CEREMONIES AND RESPECTS

He that is only real had need have exceeding great parts of virtue, as the stone had need to be rich that is set without foil. But if a man mark it well, it is in praise and commendation of men

as it is in gettings and gains. For the proverb is true, that light gains make heavy purses; for light gains come thick, whereas great come but now and then. So it is true that small matters win great commendation, because they are continually in use and in note, whereas the occasion of any great virtue cometh but on festivals. Therefore it doth much add to a man's reputation, and is, as Queen Isabella said, like perpetual letters commendatory, to have good forms. To attain them it almost sufficeth not to despise them; for so shall a man observe them in others, and let him trust himself with the rest. For if he labour too much to express them, he shall lose their grace, which is to be natural and unaffected. Some men's behaviour is like a verse wherein every syllable is measured. How can a man comprehend great matters that breaketh his mind too much to small observations? Not to use ceremonies at all is to teach others not to use them again, and so diminish respect to himself. Especially they be not to be omitted to strangers and formal natures. But the dwelling upon them and exalting them above the moon is not only tedious, but doth diminish the faith and credit of him that speaks. And certainly there is a kind of conveying of effectual and imprinting passages amongst compliments which is of singular use, if a man can hit upon it. Amongst a man's peers a man shall be sure of familiarity; and therefore it is good a little to keep state. Amongst a man's inferiors one shall be sure of reverence; and therefore it is good a little to be familiar. He that is too much in any thing, so that he giveth another occasion of satiety, maketh himself cheap. To apply one's self to others is good, so it be with demonstration that a man doth it upon regard, and not upon facility. It is a good precept generally in seconding another yet to add somewhat of one's own: as, if you will grant his opinion, let it be with some distinction; if you will follow his motion, let it be with condition; if you allow his counsel, let it be with alleging further reason. Men had need beware how they be too perfect in compliments; for be they never so sufficient otherwise, their enviers will be sure to give them that attribute, to the disadvantage of their greater virtues. It is loss also in business to be too full of respects, or to be curious in observing times and opportunities. Solomon saith, *He that considereth the wind shall not sow,*

and he that looketh to the cloud shall not reap. A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. Men's behaviour should be like their apparel, not too strait or point device, but free for exercise or motion.

This is clearly systematic; but where are the paragraphs? The answer is in the habit of Bacon's mind. He was content to formulate in concise, suggestive summary. He had none of the public speaker's wish to develop an idea fully. He has very little amplification. Thus for the average man his essays make too hard reading. In formulating an idea concisely he has never been surpassed, and very rarely equaled; but in expanding an idea — that he leaves to the reader. Thus Bacon's readers are limited to the intellectual. Thus his paragraphs are undeveloped. Instead of a full paragraph, he gives a few sentences, sometimes only one. In the essay above, the first undeveloped paragraph ends *to have good forms*. For somewhat fuller paragraph development see the essays on *Simulation and Dissimulation*, *Envy*, and *Friendship*. Bacon, then, wrote in the strictly expository type of essay; but did not usually develop his paragraphs.

a. LOOSER ESSAY, THE *SPECTATOR* TYPE

In marked contrast to this is a form of essay developed in the eighteenth century. Steele, Addison, Swift, and their friends addressed their essays, not to the intellectual few, but to the larger public; and while Swift commonly used the logical development by paragraphs, Steele and Addison struck out in the *Spectator* a new line. Though their object was to circulate truer ideas of life, they thought that a better way was to awaken and sustain interest. To this end the *Spectator* papers depend largely on description; and for this reason they often have very slight logical progress and rather loose paragraphs. Though longer than most of

Bacon's essays, these papers are still short, much shorter usually than the essays of to-day. But they are not short by Bacon's intellectual method of compression; they are short because the thought is not sustained and carried out. Rather the essays are pleasantly suggestive. They may be even fragmentary; for they aimed to keep the character of good conversation. This type of easy, fluent, picturesque comment on life gained enduring popularity. Not only was the *Spectator* imitated by later journals, but outside of regular periodical publications its form of essay was followed long after by Lamb, Irving, Hazlitt, and Lowell, and is still the most popular form of essay to-day.

b. STRICTER ESSAY, THE *EDINBURGH REVIEW* TYPE

Early in the nineteenth century the *Edinburgh Review* was founded for more serious, thorough, and sustained exposition. The idea was to provide systematic criticism of literature, and, through that, of life. Francis Jeffrey, the first editor, had a remarkable faculty of exposition. He loved to think a thing through, stage by stage, to a conclusion. Though his diction is often strong and suggestive, his chief excellence is his grasp of the paragraph. The paragraph became in his hands a clearer and more logical unit of composition than had been at all common in English. This trick of the paragraph was learned through apprenticeship to Jeffrey by the greatest of the *Edinburgh* reviewers, Macaulay. Macaulay's essays are the most familiar examples of the type. They are longer than the *Spectator* essays — often twenty times as long — because their audience and their object are different. They are not only critical; they are systematic and sustained. The books that they review are treated merely as points of departure for an extended, systematic treatment of the subject. The *Edinburgh* reviewers wished their readers to know, not only the worth of a new

book, but the worth of its ideas in relation to all the best thought upon the subject. They wished to carry a reader through a definite course of thought to a definite conclusion. He might accept it or reject it; but at least he had been made to think. Thus many of Macaulay's paragraphs have the clearness and emphasis of the paragraphs of a speech. Whether they are argumentative — and they often are — or expository, they carry us through a progress of thought. Not content to throw out ideas or to suggest them by descriptive detail, they discuss ideas fully and progressively. This type of essay was followed later by Cardinal Newman, Matthew Arnold, and so many others of recent times that when we hear the word *essay* to-day we think naturally of an orderly, logical development by paragraphs.

CHAPTER III

PERSUASION

As discussion goes beyond information, so beyond discussion reaches persuasion. Information, discussion, persuasion, are not three component parts of rhetoric, but three degrees. Information passes over into discussion, discussion into persuasion. The processes overlap as each leads on to the next. Discussion is information — and more; persuasion is discussion — and more. Persuasion is more than discussion in that it is appeal for assent and action. Discussion seeks to elucidate; persuasion seeks also to move. This effort to move men may be incidental or additional to discussion, or, *vice versa*, it may subordinate information and discussion to itself, may be the constant object of the whole composition. In either case persuasion pushes farther the means already studied and also uses means of its own. Thus, if taken in the largest sense, persuasion covers the whole field of the composition of ideas (page 3), or of rhetoric as understood by the ancients. The function of rhetoric as defined by Aristotle is to discover in any subject the possibilities and means of persuasion.

The word persuasion is used not only of the process of appeal, but also of its result. It means, not only persuading, but being persuaded. Thus used, it is often contrasted with conviction, the one being thought of as the result of appeal to feeling, the other as the result of appeal to reason. The distinction is misleading in so far as it suggests that feeling and reason operate separately and distinctly; for in fact they usually work together. We are not so crudely

two-fold that it is easy to find feeling without reason, or reason without feeling. Pure reason is rather an abstract idea than a fact of human nature; and all great orators have composed accordingly. Feeling, again, hardly has its way among civilized people without at least some show of reason. Shakespeare is true to human nature in making Mark Antony's appeal to the feelings of the mob in form argumentative. The separation of address to reason from address to feeling may, indeed, have some use in analysis; but in actual composition it is impracticable because the two are inextricably commingled. Conviction is partial persuasion. Certainly the aim of argument is to convince; but it is not an ultimate aim, nor gained by processes entirely distinct from appeal to feeling. Feeling and reason are appealed to, not separately, but together; and all the means of appeal are included in the idea of persuasion. Thus argument should be thought of always as part of persuasion. The force of argument is the force of the underlying facts and of their emphatic and coherent arrangement; the force of eloquence is rather the force of diction. The one is more a matter of substance and structure, the other more a matter of style. But in actual composition the two are fused. Style cannot be separated from substance except to study it after it has been uttered. In the actual uttering it is not something additional; it is the speaker in his subject. He does not add feeling to reason; he urges his reasons through his feelings upon the feelings of his hearers. He speaks as a man to men.

The idea of persuasion as single, entire, not divided into two separate appeals, opens the way for Aristotle's still wider saying that the first means of persuasion is the speaker himself. Persuasion reaches its height when subject and speaker are one, when the man is possessed by the subject. What made men renounce the world to seek misery with

that young Italian who was afterwards called St. Francis of Assisi? Daniel Webster once stood in Faneuil Hall and said: "Gentlemen, I am a Whig, a Constitutional Whig, a Faneuil Hall Whig; and, if you break up the Whig party, where am I to go?" "But," says Wendell Phillips, "if he had been five feet, three — !" That cry of Agrippa, "With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make *me* a Christian," suggests an amazing influence of personality, as the speaker implies in his famous rejoinder. In its lower ranges also, in ordinary, every-day use, persuasion is the work of the whole man. It is knowledge set to work, energized by a person. As the ancient training of the orator focused his whole education, so persuasion to-day depends on far more than technical skill in composition. Fed by many studies, it is in the last analysis the expressive force of personality.

But though the indirect training for persuasion is thus one's whole education, direct training has shown none the less value through many centuries. No field of composition has been longer or more assiduously studied; in none is the experience of masters more available for students. Being almost coextensive with civilized society, it has a well tested body of practical precepts. Some of these have been discussed sufficiently in preceding pages; of the others most apply to the general processes of argument and the particular conditions of oral address.

I. THE TECHNIC OF ARGUMENT

Argument is essentially the giving of reasons for or against a proposition. The word is both general and particular; that is, it means either one reason for a proposition or a whole body of reasons taken together. Whether formal or informal, whether incidental or controlling a whole composition, argument is always held to a single proposition. To

argue a word or a phrase is impossible. *The Monroe Doctrine, State Ownership of Railroads, Compulsory Military Service*, — such merely topical statement may be sufficient for profitable discussion, and such discussion may be a useful preliminary to argument proper; but so soon as discussion passes into persuasion, so soon as we seek to win assent, the conclusion must be fixed in a definite sentence (page 38): *The United States should maintain the Monroe Doctrine, or The United States should establish such-and-such a form of military service*. Argument cannot go on, much less come to anything, without thus fixing its object in a definite proposition.

1. The Finding of Arguments

a. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

For argument, even more than for information or general discussion, research needs to be guided by reflection (pages 18, 37). Instead of merely accumulating, the investigator must pause repeatedly, not only to analyze the bearings of material already in hand, but also to raise larger questions. First of all, the proposition should be scrutinized in the light of preliminary investigation, to see if it fairly and fully states a real debate, and, if not, to have it revised. Then the issues that bear directly on this, the few main contentions on which the argument will probably turn, should be forecast and from time to time reviewed in the light of further knowledge. These are often called *the issues*; and they cannot be discovered by investigation without thought. One good way to find them, instead of rashly choosing what lies on the surface, is to set apart the common ground, the facts as to which there can be no dispute and the conclusions from them admitted by both sides.¹ This common

¹ In legal practise the common ground and the issues are sometimes determined by preliminary "pleadings," which are worth the investigation of students interested in the study of law.

ground cannot, indeed, be determined without investigation; but it cannot be determined by investigation alone. It should be forecast and revised by reflection.

There is often gain of time also in reflecting on how far the proof must be carried for sufficiency. Is it enough to prove this proposal impracticable, or must the argument go on to show one that would be practicable? Another useful reflection is on the opponent's probable line of attack. This helps to gauge the sufficiency of one's material, and may even change the forecast of the issues. In such ways one must so question his own mind as to bring to bear, not only the material of his present investigation, but the whole fund of his experience. To promote thorough questioning of both, the ancients had a regular system for determining in any case the *status*, or fundamental character. The *status* considered in its legal aspects (*status legalis*) is beyond our scope. The *status* considered in its general aspects of reason, as an affair of common argument (*status rationalis*), was determined in the classical system by asking oneself how far the case hinged (1) on fact, on whether such-and-such things had happened, or (2) on definition, i.e., on what *genus* properly included (page 24) the *differentia* in question, or (3) more broadly on the interpretation of facts and definitions admitted by both sides. Though most cases need to be looked at from all these three points of view, in most there will be found a decided predominance of one; and forecast of this will direct the emphasis of the whole argument, will tell where to throw one's weight. Cicero¹ sums up the consideration of *status* somewhat differently, and very suggestively, in three practical questions: (1) What kind of case is it in general (*natura causæ*), i.e., of fact or of interpretation? (2) On what does it turn, i.e., what is the point

¹ *De Oratore*, Book II, xxiv-xxxi.

but for which there would be no debate (*quid faciat causam; id est, quo sublato controversia stare non possit*)? (3) Why is it disputed? How does the dispute arise (*quid veniat in iudicium*)? In a word, investigation of the facts must be constantly directed by reflection on the issues.

b. EVIDENCE, THE ARGUMENTATIVE USE OF FACTS

The investigation of facts, in its main aspects of authority, collation, and classification, has already been discussed (pages 11-16). To verify facts, to distinguish them from inferences, and to verify our own inferences, — these are tasks not only of argument, but to some extent of all discussion. In all discussion, even in information, the fundamental question is, What are the facts? But in argument facts are relevant only in so far as they tend to establish proof. Discussion may suggest; argument must prove. Discussion may be inclusive; argument is held to a single proposition. Facts used to prove are called evidence. Is the evidence on this point sufficient? Is the point a valid inference from the evidence, or may the evidence be used to prove something different? In argument these are the particular forms taken by those fundamental questions of all research: (1) What are the facts? and (2) What do they mean? They are well phrased in the two-fold challenge of debate: (1) How do you know? and (2) What of it? How do you know? can be met only by making sure that the facts accumulated by research are really evidence.

The general tests of evidence given at page 13 may be supplemented as follows:

(1) In general, since it is notorious that few people are habitually accurate observers beyond the rather narrow range of their interests or preoccupations, anybody's report of his observations should be analyzed, so far as possible, into its particulars for scrutiny. That is, testimony should

be considered, never in bulk, but always in detail, point by point.

(2) Then, is the witness intelligent, of established character, responsible for his statements, clear from suspicion of bias or self-interest, and consistent?

(3) Further, is the testimony corroborated or does it stand alone? Is there any testimony of fairly equal moral and intellectual weight to contravene it?

(4) Testimony given unwittingly (i.e., without consciousness of its import), or against the bias or interest of the witness, may have thereby an added significance.

(5) Particular value attaches also to the testimony of a witness¹ expert in the observation of the class of facts involved.

Practically this means seek evidence that cannot easily be challenged. Most argument outside of law courts being based on evidence in print, sufficient testimony to fact is practically (1) the primary publications, the original documents (subject to the tests of credibility above), or as far back toward them as research can reasonably extend; (2) authority, i.e., accepted sources of information, as standard gazetteers, publications of government bureaus, etc. It is futile to argue about forestry or the adulteration of food products from an article in a popular magazine when every large library contains the reports of the Department of Agriculture; to take statistics about the Philippines from a campaign speech when one's opponent may counter with the reports of the Philippine Commission; to be content with information about the Siberian Railway from an article

¹ By this is not meant "expert testimony," which may be the *opinion* of some one recognized as an authority in the matter involved; e.g. the report of a physician to the effect that a certain death was caused by chloroform, or of a bank teller to the effect that a certain signature was made by a certain man.

written to entertain, when the latest gazetteers and the publications of geographical societies furnish statistics far less liable to dispute.

2. The Analysis of Argument

Every extended argument supports its proposition by many reasons. Of these, some are directly reasons for the proposition, others are reasons for these reasons, and beneath all, as the basis for every inference, are the individual facts. Thus the simplest and most complete method of analyzing the purely logical bearings of an argument is as follows: (1) to write at the head of a large sheet the proposition to be proved; (2) to write underneath, numbering them A, B, C, etc., with spaces between, those reasons for the proposition which seem to be the largest, those main reasons that include minor reasons within themselves and support the proposition directly; (3) to write underneath each of these, numbering them 1, 2, 3, etc., in the blank spaces, the reasons for this larger reason; (4) to write underneath 1, or 2, or 3, numbering them *a*, *b*, *c*, etc., the facts that in turn go to prove this. This sort of analysis shows at a glance both the whole line of argument and the bearing of each part, even of each separate fact. It shows which are the main arguments, which are the minor ones. It shows how every bit of the material bears, whether as a main point supporting the proposition directly, or as a minor point supporting one of these main points. It is a complete chart or guide to the material. After it has been thought out and revised, it will furnish a complete index to the notes, for these can be numbered and grouped accordingly; but it is no less applicable to the informal argument of every day, such as the following:

You ought to study medicine in New York, where the greatest professors are and the best hospitals, not in this small city just

because this would be cheaper. Do not be "penny wise and pound foolish."

What this informal, every-day argument amounts to logically, and what its relations are, can be seen clearly by this system of analysis:

Proposition: You ought to study medicine in New York.

Reason A. New York has better professors.

Reason B. New York has better hospitals.

Reason C. That New York would cost more is not a sufficient objection.

Reason for C. 1. The ultimate gain would make the present expense cheap.

Of this argument two points (A and B) are positive, or direct, and the third (C) negative, or indirect (i.e., argument by refutation). The argument on the other side would probably run in conversation as follows:

I do not need to be told that the New York hospitals are the best; but a man can not get more than so much experience in two years, and there is enough here to keep me busy. As to professors, they are not better in New York; they are only better known. Smith here knows all there is to know about anatomy, and he will give me more of his time than any professor in New York can ever give to any single man in those large classes. Besides, I can not go to New York without borrowing of father. If I stay here, I shall be independent; and he would like to have me stay, though he would not refuse me the money to go.

By the same system of tabular analysis this arranges itself as follows:

I ought not to study medicine in New York.

A. The fact that New York hospitals are better is not important.

1. The hospital here will give me all the experience I can assimilate in two years.

B. The assertion that the New York professors are better is not true in the sense in which the word is used.

1. Though they are more eminent, they know no more about their subjects.

x. Professor Smith here knows all anatomy.

2. Even if they did know more, they could teach any given man rather less than more,

x. The size of the class precludes much attention to the individual.

C. The "penny wise, pound foolish" proverb is not in point.

1. I could not go to New York without borrowing money

2. By borrowing I should sacrifice my independence.

3. By borrowing I should impose on my father's generosity.

D. It would please my father better, if I did not.

Here, as often in debate, the reply consists largely of refutation.

But suppose the first speaker persists in his contention, reviewing the case, and adding new arguments to the following effect:

You ought to study medicine in New York.

A. New York has better teaching.

1. It is admitted that the professors are more eminent.

2. It is only fair to presume that the reputation of a great school demands, and its endowments secure, the best teaching.

3. The argument that the professors are merely more eminent, without having more knowledge, is fallacious.

a. Eminence makes superiority highly probable.

(1) An undeserved name cannot be held long in the competition of a great city.

b. The instance of Professor Smith, who "knows all there is to know about anatomy," is not sufficient.

(1) It is only one case.

- (2) The contention assumes that the science of anatomy is complete, finished forever; and this is not true.
 - (3) The other branches of study are still more subject to the revision of recent investigations.
 - (a) Physiology is yearly made more exact.
 - (b) Therapeutics undergo perpetual revision.
 - (c) Even the *materia medica* is not fixed.
 - (4) Only the large schools benefit by recent discoveries at once.
4. The advantage of the small school, that the professors can give more time to the individual student, is overbalanced by the advantages of the large school.
- a. It is admitted that the lectures in the large school are at least equal.
 - b. The teaching of the individual student is carried on more thoroughly by the "quizzes" of the large school than by the professor in the small school.
 - c. The appliances of the large school, as models, charts, specimens, and especially dissecting rooms, are superior.
- B. New York has better hospitals.
- 1. The New York hospitals offer far greater variety for clinics.
 - 2. The New York hospitals show the latest methods in both medicine and surgery.
 - 3. The assertion that a man may learn all he can hold from two years in any hospital is fallacious.
 - a. If it means that the student cannot profit by variety and by superior methods, it is untrue.
 - b. It ignores the superior opportunity for appointment to a city hospital after graduation.
- C. The lack of present funds is not a sufficient bar.
- 1. It is admitted that money can be borrowed.
 - 2. The argument for independence is fallacious.
 - a. Independence thus gained might be but temporary.

- b.* Permanent independence is promised more quickly by superior training.
 - c.* It is open to you to borrow at interest.
- D.** The present gratification of your father is not a strong argument.
 - 1.** Your father would rather forego present gratification for the future gratification of greater good to you.
 - a.* This appears in his willingness to advance you money for New York.
 - 2.** Your father has the comfort of your younger brothers.
 - 3.** The experience of your elder brother shows this.
 - a.* Your father has repeatedly expressed his satisfaction at your elder brother's going to New York to study engineering.
 - b.* Your brother spent nearly as much time in the company of his family during vacations as he could have spent if he had studied at home.

The object of this system of analysis is to bring every bit of material into some definite bearing. It makes us ask concerning every note, Just what does that prove? To this end, every part must be expressed in a sentence. Only thus can its bearing be determined. If some fact will not fit into the system, it is in the wrong place, or its bearing is not clearly understood, or it has no bearing at all and should therefore be omitted. Each detail of the argument (*a*, *b*, or *c*) must read as a reason for the larger point (1, 2, or 3) under which it stands, as if it were preceded by the conjunction *for*. Each larger point in turn (1, 2, or 3) must read as a reason for the still larger point (*A*, *B*, or *C*) under which it stands. Each largest point (*A*, *B*, or *C*) must read as a direct reason for the proposition. Or, to put it the other way, *A*, *B*, *C*, etc., are reasons for the proposition; 1, 2, 3, etc., are reasons for *A* or *B* or *C*, etc.; *a*, *b*, *c*, etc., are reasons for 1 or 2 or 3, etc. When successive arguments are

designated by the same type, as 1 and 2, they are understood to be coordinate, as if they were connected by the conjunction *and*; when successive arguments are designated by difference of type, as 1 and *a*, the second is understood to be subordinate to the first, as if they were connected by the conjunction *for*. This distinction is marked still more clearly, as in the plan above, by keeping coordinate arguments in the same column and setting subordinate arguments a little to the right. In a word, the object of this system is to classify the notes.

Though at first the system may seem complicated, it is never in fact more complicated than the material to which it is applied. A long investigation of a subject in many aspects might, indeed, require not only A's, 1's, and *a*'s, but all the other types in the font; but in ordinary arguments the plan may be applied quite simply. In fact, it is of constant use in arguments that require no research at all.

For, not Therefore. — Still, a few cautions will save trouble. First, this system of analysis excludes the word *therefore*. It would, indeed, be just as logical to turn the system upside down, thus:

- (1) An undeserved name cannot be held long in the competition of a great city. *Therefore*
 - a.* Eminence makes superiority highly probable. *Therefore*
 - 3. The argument that the professors are merely more eminent, without having more knowledge, is fallacious. *Therefore*
 - A. New York has better teaching. *Therefore*
(Proposition) You ought to study medicine in New York.

And in delivering this argument one might follow that order. But the analysis goes the other way about in order to give such prominence to the main points as will make

them catch the eye; and, having started that way, it must not change; it must keep one way throughout. Otherwise the system will break down. The conjunction implied must always be *for*. This applies, of course, simply to the analysis, not at all to the order of sentences in a spoken paragraph.

How to Bring Opposing Arguments into the Analysis. — Secondly, this system includes, not only the positive arguments on one's own side, but also the answers to the arguments of opponents. It is all made from one point of view, for no one can argue on both sides at once; but it takes account of the other point of view by bringing in opposing arguments to answer them. This is called *rebuttal*. In the plan above, the main point D, and the subordinate point 3 under A, are rebuttals; for rebuttal may come in either as a main point or as a subordinate point. In either case it comes into the analysis always in this one way:

E. The argument (or assertion) that . . . (*Here state the opposing argument*) is insufficient (or not supported by the facts, or unwarranted). (*Here sum up in a word or phrase the way in which you meet the opposing argument.*)

1. *Here state a fact or reason in support of your objection.*
2. *Here state a fact or reason in support of your objection; etc.*

Strict adherence to this form makes possible the bringing in of any argument whatsoever for the other side without upsetting the plan as a plan for one's own side. It has the further advantage of showing just how an opposing argument, as well as a positive argument of one's own, bears on the whole debate. Best of all, it sets up the other side only to knock it down. It forces one to answer. It forces him to consider just where and how any attack should be met. No one can argue well without considering the other side; neither can any one argue well without staying on his own

side while he meets the other side squarely. For the way to rebut is so to turn the arguments of an adversary as to strengthen one's own case.

Division under a Few Main Heads. — Finally, the very object of analysis being to bring out the main points, these main points should be few. A plan consisting of ten main points is a plan not carefully thought out. Some of these ten points thus set down as coordinate must in fact be subordinate to the others; for any ordinary argument can be grouped under four or five cardinal points, and many a good argument has had only two or three. All the others group themselves under these. A man who has the proverbial twenty reasons for a proposition has some larger and some smaller; and the smaller ones, the details, should be grouped under the larger. Indeed, the chief service of this sort of plan-making is to develop a habit of looking, in any question, for the main lines, the large considerations, the great points, — in a word, to teach grouping. People who can thus group readily are said to see through a question; and no one is further from seeing through a question than the man who has merely accumulated a mass of facts without classification, who has no better idea of discussion than merely to rehearse one fact after another. He is like the man in the proverb who could not see the forest for the trees. He is bewildered by his own knowledge because his knowledge is disorderly. The main use of analysis is to group the material finally under a few main propositions which are felt to be necessary and vital.

ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTS OF LINCOLN
AND OF DOUGLAS IN THE DEBATE AT
GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

(The Fifth Debate, October 7, 1858, in the Contest for the United States Senatorship.¹)

I. ARGUMENT OF DOUGLAS

Proposition: I ask your votes as the candidate of the Democratic party.

A. *I have maintained consistently the Democratic principle of popular sovereignty.*

1. My Kansas-Nebraska Bill declared this principle explicitly.

2. My opposition to the Lecompton Constitution was based on this principle.

a. That constitution was not the will of the people of Kansas.

b. The charge that this opposition was disloyal to the party is unfounded.

(1) The Lecompton men offered a compromise on the English Bill.

3. My opposition to the English Bill was based on this principle.

a. This bill violated the principle of the equality of states.

(1) It proposed to admit Kansas as a slave state with less population than as a free state.

b. My opposition was not due to the position of Kansas as to slavery.

(1) I should have had the same objection had the proposal been for a free state.

c. The charge that this opposition was disloyal to the party is unfounded.

¹ Reprinted, pages 79-141, in Archibald L. Bouton's *The Lincoln and Douglas Debates* (New York, 1905), in which will be found an introduction and notes supplying historical information.

- (1) It comes from political machination.
 - (2) It is inconsistent with the attitude of the party in other states.
- B. *The Republican party is sectional.*
1. It appeals to the North against the South.
 2. Its principles cannot be proclaimed in the South.
 3. Even in this single state of Illinois its utterances in the northern section are inconsistent with its utterances in the southern.
 4. In different parts of the state it calls itself by different names.
- C. *The Democratic theory of settling the slavery question in accordance with popular sovereignty is sound.*
1. The Republican interpretation of the Declaration of Independence is a heresy.
 - a. The signers had no intention of including the negro.
 - (1) Jefferson owned slaves.
 - (2) All the colonies were slave-holding colonies.
 2. The Democratic doctrine does not enforce slavery.
 - a. It offers the inferior race every privilege consistent with the safety of white society.
 3. The different states of the Union have legislated concerning the negro differently.
 - a. We in Illinois hold him neither slave nor citizen; Kentucky holds a different doctrine; etc.
 4. This principle of states' rights is at the foundation of our government.
 5. The objection that the Dred Scott decision makes it impossible to exclude slavery from a territory will not hold.
 - a. Slavery can be excluded by the local police power.
 - (1) This view was upheld by Mr. Orr and other Southern Congressmen.
 6. Mr. Lincoln's theory of "a house divided against itself" is inconsistent with the intention of the Constitution.
 - a. If it had been held by the Constitutional Convention, it would have nationalized slavery.
 - (1) The slave-holding states were twelve to one.

II. REPLY OF LINCOLN

Proposition: I ask your votes as the candidate of the Republican party.

A. *Judge Douglas's objections to the Republican position will not stand.*

1. The charge as to the Declaration of Independence will not stand.
 - a. No one, up to three years ago, ever denied that the Declaration includes the negro.
 - b. The fact that Jefferson owned slaves is more than offset by his declaration concerning slavery, that he trembled for his country when he remembered that God was just.
2. The charges as to party names is a mere quibble.
 - a. The calls of meetings to hear Judge Douglas show the same differences as those to hear me.
 - b. His party no longer calls itself the National Democracy.
3. The charge as to inconsistency will not stand.
 - a. I am aware that all my speeches will be printed.
 - b. To say that the negro should not be a slave is not to affirm his social equality.
 - c. The Republican position is that the negro has equal rights under the Declaration of Independence to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
 - d. The Republican party takes issue, not with the existence of slavery in old states, but with its spread into new territories.
4. The objection that the Republican party is sectional is beside the point.
 - a. A doctrine is not unsound because it is not tolerated in some sections.
 - (1) Russia would not tolerate the Democratic platform.
 - (2) Chicago refused to listen to Judge Douglas.

- b. Judge Douglas is driven to call our doctrines sectional because he cannot rebut them.
 - c. Judge Douglas himself, in the sense in which he applied the term to us, is fast becoming sectional.
- B. *The consistency of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill with the Compromise of 1850 cannot be proved.*
 - 1. The principle of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill cannot be found in the Compromise.
 - a. The organization of New Mexico and Utah does not show it.
 - (1) The acts as to these territories were simply part of a general system of compromises.
 - (2) These acts were not followed in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.
- C. *The Democratic application of the principle of popular sovereignty to the question of slavery ignores the Republican contention that slavery is wrong.*
 - 1. All Judge Douglas's arguments exclude the idea that slavery is wrong.
 - 2. The application is logical only if slavery is right.
- (D. and E. are personal arguments applying only to the political campaign.)
- F. *The Dred Scott decision opens the way for fastening slavery even upon free states.*
 - 1. The Constitution as interpreted by the Supreme Court overrules all state legislation.
 - 2. The Dred Scott decision declares: "The right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution."
 - 3. The only escape from this conclusion is to deny the truth of the premise affirmed by the Dred Scott decision.
 - 4. We are justified in fearing that the abstract right thus inferred will be applied if the Democrats gain sufficient power.

- a. The decision would not have taken this form if the Democratic party had not been sustained in the elections.
 - b. Douglas's course of argument, whether consciously or unconsciously, is preparing the public mind for such application.
 - (1) He talks of the decision as if to question the Supreme Court were to attack the Constitution.
 - (2) His favorite sentences concerning slavery show a drift toward its nationalization.
 - (3) His exclusion of the negro from all share in the Declaration of Independence tends, in the words of Clay, to "eradicate the light of reason and the love of liberty."
- G. *The Democratic theory of leaving the question of slavery in new territories to be settled by the people of those territories is dangerous.*
- 1. For instance, we could not trust its settlement to Mexicans.
 - 2. The acquisition of new territory on these terms would aggravate our difficulties with slavery.
 - a. The constitutional power of the President and Senate to acquire new territory easily operates in this direction.
 - (1) The acquisition of territory after the war with Mexico tended in this direction.
 - (a) This territory was acquired without the prohibition of slavery by the action of the President and Senate against the wishes of the House.
 - b. Douglas's doctrine of necessary expansion opens the way for this.
 - (1) There is a constant motive for acquiring new territory in order to extend slavery.
 - 3. The slavery question is the only one that has ever endangered our republican institutions.

a. STATEMENT AND PROOF

Every course of argument consists of two processes: (1) statement of facts, or explanation; (2) drawing conclusions from facts, or inference. The former is exposition; the latter, argument proper. In the former we are telling what the facts are, and grouping them only to make clearer what every one admits concerning them; in the latter we are grouping the facts to show what we believe, and wish others to believe, that they prove. By this is not meant that every argument must begin with exposition, nor that exposition and argument are entirely distinct. Exposition may, indeed, be used as a separate and introductory stage before argument proper begins; and many disputes are clarified by a preliminary agreement as to what the undisputed facts are and what the words mean in which they are discussed. But, in general, statement of facts and inference from facts, exposition and argument, are constantly intermingled. As we find facts, we can hardly help drawing conclusions from them; as we argue, we must often stop to explain. Nor should we try to be always either purely expository or purely argumentative. This would unduly hamper the natural impulses of thought and speech. But we should clearly distinguish. We should know when we, or our opponents, are stating facts; when we or they are drawing conclusions. Otherwise we cannot analyze a course of argument or discern how to meet it. We must not let pass, in reading or debate, as mere statement of fact what conceals an inference that may be disputed. Statement and proof may be mingled; but they must not be confused. What is put forward as mere statement of facts sometimes implies certain inferences that ought to be challenged. Every one who wishes to gain power in argument must accustom himself to distinguish between the two. He

must neither ignore, nor let others ignore in debate, this fundamental distinction. He must learn to estimate facts as facts, according to the authority upon which they are asserted; inferences as inferences, according to the logic with which they are inferred (see pages 11-13).

This distinction between exposition and argument proper affects the use, in one or the other, of the system of analysis outlined above. When the system is used merely to group facts for exposition, it does not require that every point should go to prove the point next above it. A supporting point in such an analysis of exposition may be merely one part or aspect of its main point; or it may be an illustration, or even an exception. The analysis need not even be cast throughout in sentences. In the analysis of Newman's *Literature* below, C being argumentative, is cast throughout in sentences; the other parts, being mainly expository, show their relations quite as precisely and more immediately by clauses or phrases.

ANALYSIS OF NEWMAN'S LECTURE ON LITERATURE¹

Literature

A. *is primarily personal expression.*

1. It is discussed in terms of speech,
 - a. though the word, by its derivation, implies writing.
2. It cannot be conceived as a composite or mechanical product.
3. This character is what distinguishes it from science.
 - a. Scientific expression is impersonal.
 - (1) Its words are rather symbols than language.
 - b. Science deals with things; literature, with thoughts.
4. It is essentially original.
 - a. Writing of this kind is the very double of the writer.

¹ See above, page 48.

B. *is not to be tested by the degree of elaboration.*

1. This test has the fallacy of regarding elaboration as extraneous adornment.
2. But the style must be just as elaborate as the author —
 - a. copious, if he is copious:
 - (1) as we see in Shakspeare;
 - (2) and still more in Cicero,
 - (a) who, while others wrote Latin, wrote "Roman."
3. And, whether elaborate or not, literature is elaborated,
 - a. as painting is, or sculpture.
 - b. even when the result seems least elaborate, as in the case of
 - (1) Demosthenes,
 - (a) who studied style by transcribing Thucydides;
 - (2) Herodotus,
 - (a) who adopted a special dialect;
 - (3) Addison,
 - (a) who could not let a state paper go without elaboration;
 - (4) Virgil,
 - (a) who wished to burn his *Æneid*;
 - (5) Gibbon,
 - (b) who wrote his first chapter three times.

C. *is not to be tested by adaptability to translation.*

1. This test puts literature on the same basis as science.
2. It is belied by the analogy of other arts.
 - a. Beethoven cannot be played on the hurdy-gurdy.
3. It can be exploded by *reductio ad absurdum*.
 - a. Shakspeare can be translated into German, but not into French.
 - b. The multiplication table would then be a triumph of literature.
4. Each language, like each art, has its own peculiar capacities and limitations.

D. *at its highest, is the expression of what is most permanently and widely human.*

1. It is the expression of eminent representative personalities.
 - a. It says what is felt by all, but what can be said only by great masters:
 - (1) Virgil,
 - (2) Shakspeare,
 - (3) in general, the classics.

E. *therefore deserves the closest study.*

But when this system of analysis is applied to argument, then only one relation is admissible. Every fact must go to prove the inference under which it is grouped; every inference in turn must go to prove the larger inference next above it. In every case the relation of larger part to smaller is the single relation expressed by the conjunction *for*, until we come down to the facts. These are at the bottom of all. We must be sure that they are facts; else the superstructure of inference will fall. The very form of the analysis, then, may show the difference between stating and proving. Useful for either, this system is less useful in exposition than in argument; and its use in either is only for analysis, for seeing through an accumulation of material, not at all for composing it.

3. The Logical Processes of Argument

Beneath the various forms of argument lie three habitual processes, which are summed up and explored by logic as deduction, induction, and analogy. For example, to show that elections to the United States Senate should be by direct popular vote, it has been argued:

(1) from general principle, that our government is based on the idea of popular representation;

(2) from facts, that the indirect method of election keeps senators from being directly amenable to the will of the people of their states;

(3) by comparison, that the British House of Lords shows the danger of a privileged body able to obstruct legislation demanded by a large majority of the people.

These are three fundamental ways of arguing. The first, arguing from general principles, is called *deduction*; the second, arguing from the facts under investigation, is called *induction*; the third, arguing from a parallel case outside, is called *analogy*. To apply these three ways on the other side of the same question, it may be argued:

(1) by deduction from general principles, that the underlying ideas of our Constitution with regard to representation are (a) to represent the states as states, not merely the people as a whole, and (b) to maintain a system of checks and balances;

(2) by induction from the facts under investigation, that the Senate has not shown itself less amenable than the House to the will of a majority of the nation.

(3) by analogy of a parallel case outside, that the French Senate shows the value of a second chamber in a representative republican government.

All these three ways of arguing are so useful that, instead of troubling ourselves as to which is best, we should try to use all. It is well to cultivate all ways of arguing. But the three ways are not equally good for every case. Some propositions depend more on deduction because, the facts being imperfectly known or hard to find, we are thrown back for our decision on the general principles or ideas under which we have come to group our previous knowledge. Other propositions depend more on induction because, the question being new, our previous ideas give us comparatively little guidance. As to analogy, though it may be used in almost any discussion, it is never sufficient by itself.

a. DEDUCTION

Deduction is the attempt to bring a particular case into line with the generalizations already made by experience. In this large sense it is reasoning from the general to the particular, as induction is reasoning from the particular to the general in the sense of reasoning from the facts of the case to a conclusion covering all facts of the same class. Deduction thus corresponds roughly to the logical term *a priori*,¹ as when we conclude that a man will go to Mass because he is a Catholic. Such reasoning from one's store of previous generalizations is most useful in forecast of probabilities (page 97). Correspondingly its besetting danger is prejudice. As we thus survey a question by the light of our general ideas, we must not try to settle it in advance finally. Unless we keep our minds open, we cannot interpret the evidence. Deduction must help, not hinder, induction. With this caution we may always profit by arguing deductively before and during research.

(1) *Argument from Antecedent Probability*

That form of deductive reasoning which is perhaps most obviously *a priori* is the *argument from antecedent probability*. My friend A is accused of forgery. Before hearing any of the evidence I argue that the charge is false because A would not commit forgery. We all recognize this as a fair way of rejecting some propositions. If a newspaper should announce the invention of an air-ship capable of carrying one hundred passengers across the Atlantic at a speed of three hundred miles an hour, most of us would doubt, and some of us would utterly deny, the statement without

¹ *A priori* is sometimes still defined to mean reasoning from cause to effect (*a posteriori*, reasoning from effect to cause); but this definition no longer covers current use.

investigation. In forecasting investigation, moreover, we argue from antecedent probability: "No use in spending time on such testimony"; or, "There should be traces here"; or, more generally, "It will not be hard to make a great array of supporting evidence"; or, "This cannot be settled by evidence; it must be fought out on general considerations." In fact, the chief use of antecedent probability is to clear the way, to forecast. It is preliminary, not final. Though I rightly refuse to tolerate a charge of forgery against my friend, yet I must admit that even his well known uprightness does not, as against positive evidence of his having signed such and such checks, prove his innocence. The argument from antecedent probability shows which way the probabilities lean before the case is investigated; it establishes a presumption. In some cases we are content to accept it as sufficient; in other cases, we have nothing better; in most cases we go on to the evidence.

(2) *Syllogism and Enthymeme*

A deductive argument is always reducible to a *syllogism*. The syllogism, or strictly logical deductive summary, consists typically of three parts:

Major Premise. All immigrants must have "first papers" in order to vote.

Minor Premise. This immigrant has not "first papers."

Conclusion. This immigrant cannot vote.

This is the form followed in geometry. The argument starts from a truth, already established and accepted, called the major premise. It proceeds to prove that the particular proposition in question, the minor premise, comes within the scope of the major premise. The conclusion follows as a matter of course. A deductive argument is thus seen to consist of proving that the particular case in

point comes under a general law. Ideally the major premise is universal and indisputable; the minor premise indicates the course of the argument, which is to prove that a particular instance falls within that universal, indisputable truth; the conclusion follows of necessity. This conclusion, being necessary, being now demonstrated as a universal, indisputable truth, becomes in turn the major premise for succeeding syllogisms, and so on. Thus geometry is a chain of syllogisms; and, conversely, all syllogistic argument may be carried back and back until it rests on some axiom.

It follows that in matters of ordinary debate we cannot establish a case entirely by deduction, for the evident reason that we cannot get an indisputable major premise. Otherwise the question would not be under discussion; it would no longer be a question, for it would be already settled. Persuasion, as Aristotle says,¹ is not absolute and abstract, but relative and concrete. Our arguments concern "things which appear to admit the possibility of conclusion either way . . . for no one ever deliberated about things which offer no alternative, which can exist or issue in only one way." In other words, persuasion is not demonstration; rhetoric is not logic. But practical deduction, though it cannot use the syllogism rigorously, constantly uses a modification of it which Aristotle calls the *enthymeme*. An enthymeme is a partial syllogism, incomplete in form or in degree. *This immigrant cannot vote because he has not "his first papers"* is an enthymeme corresponding to the syllogism above. *Nothing but confusion can come from this divided responsibility* is an enthymeme corresponding to some such syllogism as the following:

Major Premise. All cases of divided responsibility lead to confusion.

¹ *Rhetoric*, Book I.

Minor Premise. This is a case of divided responsibility.

Conclusion. Therefore this case will lead to confusion.

So formulated, it is seen to be incomplete, not only by its informal abbreviation, which is the usual way of actual argument, but by a margin of doubt in the major premise, which expresses, not a universal, indisputable truth, but a working hypothesis, a generalization accepted, indeed, and quite sufficient for the required degree of proof, but subject to correction by the progress of science. Enthymemes are practical deductions from principles which, if not accepted universally, are yet accepted generally as sufficient guides to conduct. Such argument is not only legitimate, but even necessary as complementary to induction. Whereas logic, then, deals abstractly with syllogisms, as typically in the demonstrations of mathematics, rhetoric deals concretely with enthymemes.

But though the syllogism cannot be used constructively in a whole course of practical argument, it not only can be, but must be, used analytically as a test. The only safe way of testing a dubious deductive argument, whether one's own or an opponent's, is to sum it up in a syllogism. The very rigor of the syllogism will reveal any latent weakness. It will show whether the minor premise really follows from the major; and especially it will show whether the major premise is large enough for the logical demand, whether it is a generally accepted principle or only a loose popular notion. This is the constant use of formal logic in practical argument.

b. INDUCTION

Induction goes the other way about. It marshals the facts collected by investigation so as to make them establish conclusions; it uses facts as evidence; it groups facts to make proof. Here are two processes, both requiring care.

First, the facts must be established separately by collation and authority (page 15); secondly, the grouping of them as evidence must be convincing. To this latter end there must be facts enough to make any disputed conclusion clear; and any well known facts that seem exceptions must be explained. In other words, induction must beware of concluding hastily. For instance, it has been found that in a street-railway strike at Waterbury, Connecticut, the strikers resorted to violence, that violence also occurred in the strike of steel-workers at Homestead, Pennsylvania, and again in a miners' strike in Colorado. Even if these separate facts can be established, the conclusion that strikes lead to violence will be challenged by at least as many instances to the contrary. For one of the greatest services of debate is to expose hasty inductions. The interpretation of facts as evidence must be so careful that no one can fairly object.

(1) *Mill's Canons*

Therefore in induction, no less than in deduction, we need to know the logical tests of valid inference. Inductive argument, or reasoning from evidence, is ultimately the investigation of causes. Inductive logic, therefore, sets forth the conditions of a valid inference of cause. These were formulated by John Stuart Mill in the five "canons" that are known by his name.

"I. *The Canon of Agreement.*

"If two or more instances of the phenomenon under investigation have only one circumstance in common, the circumstance in which alone all the instances agree is the cause (or effect) of the given phenomenon."

In an epidemic of typhoid the only circumstance in which all the cases are found to agree is the use of milk from a particular herd of cows. Therefore it is argued that the immediate cause of

the typhoid is that milk. The "characteristic imperfection" of this method is "the impossibility of assuring ourselves that we know all the antecedents in our instances."¹ It is hard enough in a country village to be sure that milk from a particular source is the only thing in which all the cases agree (one of the patients was out of town a part of every day before his illness; another has a contaminated well, which may have been used by disobedient children; etc.); in a great city, it may easily be impossible. Hence there is further

"II. *The Canon of Difference.*

"If an instance in which the phenomenon under investigation occurs and an instance in which it does not occur have every circumstance save one in common, that one occurring only in the former, the circumstance in which alone the two instances differ is the effect, or cause, or a necessary part of the cause, of the phenomenon."

"The principle is that of comparing an instance of the occurrence of a phenomenon with a similar instance in which it does not occur, to discover in what they differ."² This is typically the method of experiment. If after pressure upon a certain point of a monkey's brain certain muscles of the monkey's right leg are immediately paralyzed, *no other change having occurred* in the animal's physical conditions, it is inferred that the nerve-center thus injured is the motor-center for those leg-muscles. And, in fact, experiments of this sort have enabled physicians, from certain symptoms, to locate the exact spot of a human brain at which an operation is necessary to relieve pressure.

"III. *The Canon of the Joint Method of Agreement and Difference.*

"If two or more instances in which the phenomenon occurs have only one circumstance in common, while two

¹ Killick, *Handbook to Mill*, page 118.

² Killick, *Handbook to Mill*, page 120.

or more instances in which it does not occur have nothing in common save the absence of that circumstance, the circumstance in which alone the two sets of instances differ is the effect, or cause, or a necessary part of the cause, of the phenomenon."

"If a man finds that whenever he eats cucumber he suffers from indigestion, this indicates by Agreement that cucumber is the cause of his pain. But, if he is fond of cucumber, he will put the fault upon other ingredients of his diet taken at the same time, such as cheese, salmon, or pastry, which he likes less. Making, however, a second list of dinners (say) when visiting, at which cucumber is not served, whilst cheese, salmon, pastry, etc., all occur, and finding that he does *not* suffer from indigestion, the conclusion seems to be forced upon him that cucumber is the only pleasure of the table that must be bought with pain."¹

"IV. *The Canon of Residues.*

"Subduct from any phenomenon such part as is known by previous inductions to be the effect of certain antecedents, and the residue of the phenomenon is the effect of the remaining antecedents."

Certain college debaters are defeated. They learn from trustworthy testimony that in the opinion of the judges they equaled their opponents in weight of evidence and force of logic. The judges being assumed to have freed their decision from bias, the beaten debaters conclude the reason for their defeat to be inferiority in the only other possible element of the decision — in manner, in form.

"V. *The Canon of Concomitant Variations.*

"Whatever phenomenon varies in any manner, whenever another phenomenon varies in some particular manner, is either a cause or an effect of that phenomenon, or is connected with it through some fact of causation."

¹ Carveth Read, *Logic Deductive and Inductive*, page 178.

Examples of this canon appear graphically in charts of statistics; e.g. in charts showing the rise and fall of prices according to the degree of the prevalence of certain other economic conditions. Thus also we infer familiarly the advantages of thrift or cleanliness, or the demoralizing effects of stimulants or high temperatures. Thus, also, in cases where the other methods are not applicable, we argue by "progressive approach," as that the nearer men come toward fulfilling the counsels of the Gospels, the happier they become and the more beneficent.

These canons are all based on the uniformity of nature, on the theory that the phenomena of the universe are going on, and will go on, as they have gone on. This, as Cardinal Newman insists and Mill agrees, is an assumption; it cannot be absolutely proved. Only it is an assumption on which, in most cases at least, we are wont to act. Again, the canons are applicable primarily to the investigation of the phenomena of nature; and they are usually inapplicable strictly to the phenomena of human life; for we cannot separate emotions and weigh temperaments and tendencies as we can separate and weigh the chemical elements. But as, even in the natural sciences, the canons cannot achieve absolute demonstration, must be content with formulating tendencies, so on the other hand in the inductions of every-day research, in matters which do not admit of demonstration by any process, they offer a safeguard against fallacy and a guide to sound results. They apply profitably, though the results be even farther from demonstration than in the fields of science, to the processes of ordinary discussion. For the methods of ascertaining truth or forming hypotheses are not essentially different from those of supporting them.

(2) *Working Rules for Ordinary Induction*

From these scientific canons, then, emerge some simple working rules:

(1) Do not be content with a few instances of a supposed cause or effect, but get as many as you reasonably can. Beware of rash generalizations [*method of agreement*].

(2) Test your supposed cause or effect both positively and negatively; i.e., try to show not only that the result follows when the alleged cause is present, but that it does not follow when the alleged cause is absent [*joint method*].

(3) Try to show that your alleged cause is not merely a new condition preceding the known result, but that it is the only new condition, the only material change in the circumstances preceding the result [*method of difference*].

(4) Or show, not only that your supposed cause reasonably accounts for the known result, but that no other supposed cause accounts so well [*method of residues*].

(5) Look for a parallel rise and fall of your supposed cause and effect, as of democracy and personal liberty, of average temperature and average human energy [*method of concomitant variations*].

(3) *Circumstantial Evidence*

How carefully induction should be tested is recognized by the unwillingness of courts to convict on "merely circumstantial evidence." For circumstantial evidence is imperfect induction. By a collection of facts which, though not sufficient for a valid inference of cause, points in that direction, it establishes a certain probability. It is inconclusive; but it may fortify better evidence; and of itself it has a value in proportion, of course, as the number of particular instances increases toward the point where their united force would withstand the test of the canons.

The hypothesis that a certain prisoner caused the death of his neighbor may be rendered probable by a number of circumstances shown from credible testimony; as that the deceased had more than once injured the prisoner, that the prisoner returned home

later than usual on the night of the death, that he purchased, some days before, a pistol of the same caliber as the fatal bullet, that he left town very early the next morning, etc. But since any of these facts, and all together, will bear another explanation than murder, it is accounted unjust to infer murder without further evidence. The inference will not stand the test of the canon of difference. It is not clear whether the facts established are significant, or are merely coincident circumstances.

A man once went on a steamer wharf in New York to meet a friend returning from Europe. The satchel in his hand contained a guide-book for Paris and a necklace bearing the trade-mark of a French jeweler. On leaving the wharf he was challenged by the customs officers, and was naturally unable to convince them that he had brought the dutiable jewelry from the street, not from the steamer, until he was supported by unimpeachable testimony. The facts were that he had carried the guide-book and the necklace on a visit to New Jersey, to talk over the one and exhibit the other; circumstantial evidence pointed to an attempt to smuggle.

C. ANALOGY

Argument by analogy (*a pari*) may be called argument from history. It amounts to saying that like circumstances have like results. Therefore its force depends on the extent and degree of the likeness.

Patrick Henry cried out on a memorable occasion: "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles I his Cromwell, and George III — may profit by their example."

In arguing that Mexico will gain more in the end by working out its own civilization independently than by being absorbed or dominated politically, the analogy may be used of the Germans in the days of Julius Caesar. Though undoubtedly the Germans might have gained more in civilization at first by being absorbed as the Gauls were into the Roman Empire, yet by keeping their independence they developed into a great people.

The advantages of this method of argument are: (1) it is popular with most audiences; people like to have their

knowledge of history appealed to; (2) it gives scope to a speaker's ingenuity and penetration; it is available in cases that do not admit either full deduction or full induction, and especially in argument as to the future of men and societies. Its disadvantage is that it demands more careful use than is at all common. Cases that are loosely and popularly called like, as that of Charles I and that of George III, or the Roman Empire and a modern state, or contemporary Mexicans and early Germans, must for any argumentative force appear to be like essentially. If one essential difference can be pointed out, as in habit of government and sense of law in the case of Mexico, the argument is at least seriously weakened; if more than one, it is practically destroyed. In other words, the analogy, and conversely the difference, must be not only in a number of details (and of course the more, the stronger), but in those particular details which are characteristic, or at least in those details which are for the purposes of the argument essential. And the conclusion of an analogy is a probability, greater in proportion as the analogy approaches deduction or induction, but in popular use merely a presumption for or against what is to be proved or disproved otherwise. The conclusions of most arguments from analogy are only, This has happened before; it may happen again: but more considerate use may reach so far as to urge, The past plainly teaches us in our conditions to expect so-and-so. It may not come; but if we are wise, we shall prepare for it.

This argument by analogy, though it should by no means be abandoned, should not be content with plausibility. Furthermore, it is best used, not as a main reliance, but in support of other forms of argument. Generally deduction is most useful in preliminary survey; induction, for the main work of proof; analogy, to enliven the presentation and to enhance and clarify the exposition. Thus to bring

his point home Lincoln insinuated an analogy in his argument at Springfield¹ that the extending recognition of slavery in the United States revealed a political plot.

We cannot absolutely know that all these adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places by different workmen, — Stephen, Franklin, Roger and James, for instance — and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few, — not omitting even scaffolding, — or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in — in such a case we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck.

This case, like many others in popular argument, reminds us that the force of analogy is often largely descriptive. The concrete presentation makes the hearers see; and “seeing is believing.” Thus analogy may prevail as imaginatively vivified history. An audience may be so moved by the description as to be uncritical of the application. In ex-

¹ June 16, 1858. By the “Stephen” of his parable Lincoln was readily understood to mean Stephen A. Douglas, his political opponent, Democratic candidate for the Illinois senatorship; by “Franklin,” Pierce, just yielding the presidency to “James” Buchanan; by “Roger,” Taney, the Supreme Court justice who handed down the Dred Scott decision. “The charge, which Lincoln has now completely insinuated, is that President Pierce, his successor President Buchanan, Chief Justice Taney, and Senator Douglas, leader of the Democratic party in the senate, were in collusion for the furtherance of a policy whereby slavery was to be nationalized. This was a matter of general belief among Republicans at the time.” Note at page 250 of *The Lincoln and Douglas Debates* edited by Archibald Lewis Bouton, New York, 1905.

treme cases analogy may be used, hardly for argument at all, but rather for direct appeal to feeling. Thus the prophet Nathan's denunciation of King David (2 *Samuel*, xii. 7) consisted entirely of the parable of the poor man's ewe lamb, with the simple application "Thou art the man."

A familiar form of this so-called *a pari* argument is the *a fortiori*, the "much more" argument.

If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" — *St. Matthew*, vi. 30.

The three habitual processes of argument, then, may be summed up as follows:

1. *Deduction*: drawing down principles; arguing from reflection and experience, or out of one's head; looking forward; arguing from general principles.

2. *Induction*: drawing up evidence; arguing from investigation, or out of books; looking backward; arguing from particular facts.

3. *Analogy*: drawing a parallel; arguing by comparison; arguing that the present is like the past in a particular aspect; arguing from history.

d. DEGREES OF PROOF

The word *proof* is used of the abstract demonstration of mathematics, of establishing that "practical certainty" which is the limit of argument on many important matters, and even of attaining that fair probability which must content us in discussions still more numerous. Only in this variable sense could the words *proof* and *prove* be in current use; for absolute demonstration is not practicable in ordinary human affairs. Thus not only is it convenient and natural to speak of degrees of proof, but it is important to estimate, in any given case, what degree we can attain, how far the argument can be carried.

Certainty, of course, is the ideal of the syllogism. But

sylogistic demonstration is not applicable to those cases to which argument is usually limited. The sylogistic argument is constantly used and constantly useful in details and as a test; but the ordinary argument as a whole cannot be carried to demonstration; else there would be no argument. The subjects about which we actually argue will not yield us an indisputable major premise. Nor does induction attain to mathematical certainty. Mill prints a formal warning against regarding the conclusions even of scientifically rigid induction in the exact sciences as absolute, final truths. These "laws" of science, he says, must always be regarded as tendencies, that is as true so far as we can now determine, but possibly subject to counteraction from causes as yet undiscovered. Much more, then, in other fields, in economics, in politics — in short, in those very fields where we have occasion for most of our argument, induction reaches something less than certainty.

This is to say, not that truth is only an idea, but simply that since we must in most cases act on generalizations short of certainty, it is toward such generalizations that we direct most of our argument. We deceive ourselves, perhaps others, in setting as our goal proof in the sense of absolute, final demonstration. All that we can attain — and since it is enough to act on, it is enough to prove — is what we call practical sufficiency. Our lives are not regulated by absolute demonstrations. We live by probabilities — and by faith. Though this lower range of sufficiency is its immediate concern, persuasion is not the less concerned with truth. Our view of truth in matters of common argument we know to be incomplete. It grows; and toward its growth no small work is done by debate.

When the proposition frames, not opinion, but certitude, it may still be unnecessary to produce complete demonstration. Whether certitude without complete demonstration is reasonable; whether,

that is, it is reasonable to hold absolute truth without being able to exhibit absolute proof, — this is the inquiry of Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, to which among modern works, and to James's *The Will to Believe*, the inquirer is referred once for all. Newman's detailed application to religion is in fact the practical application. Except in religion, absolute truth is not for most men of real concern.

Persuasion, then, moves for the most part in probabilities; and it so moves, not as though truth were subjective, but because in so many of our affairs, unable to be certain, we must proceed upon probabilities. As we learn more we revise our judgments, we reach higher and higher probability, nearer and nearer approximations to truth; and in this process an important part is played by persuasion. Thus, in politics, only time gives us the truth; but meanwhile, as one proposition after another is settled, it passes from discussion, and the others that become urgent are only less doubtful than their predecessors were. Among these is persuasion, always of the living present, statesman and demagogue contending for the minds of men.

But since persuasion, more perhaps than any other kind of composition, takes color from its material, rising with its subject, it is likely to be highest, to reach the pitch of eloquence, when it presents the highest motives, the weightiest sanctions, the final obligations. So the most frequent modern opportunity for eloquence is in the pulpit. There, too, persuasion is devoted largely to winning assent to authority, to moving men, not indeed without reason, but, since the hearers are not commonly in a position to measure the proof, without proof. With and without proof, persuasion, though having its usual concern with probabilities, finds its high concern in truth. Its journey-work is to win assent to probabilities; its great opportunity is to help men toward certitudes.

II. THE PREPARATION AND REVISION OF ORAL ADDRESS

Persuasion is generally and naturally oral. Oral appeal is limited, indeed, to a particular audience; but it has the compensation of being always more immediate and urgent. Multiplied by the press, a speech gains in extent, but loses in force. There is no equivalent for the direct appeal of speaker to audience. Thus argument, the commonest means of persuasion, is usually oral. Exposition, being oftener addressed to individuals separately, and with less reference to a particular occasion, is oftener written; argument is oftener oral because it is communal, addressed to a crowd.

From the fact that argument is commonly oral arises the necessity of stricter unity (page 38). The conditions of oral address demand, not many, but much. The message, that it may be heard as a whole, must not be divided into many parts, but iterated in a few aspects and in these developed fully. A speech cannot include so many points as an essay. The difference arises from the greater strain on attention and memory, both from hearing as compared with seeing and from argument as compared with less focused discussion. For the same reasons argument is stricter also in coherence. Transitions to be caught by the ear alone must be more obvious. And in a large sense an effective argument is always worth more than the sum of its parts. Its progress is far more than mere enumeration. It has a certain force of momentum, and still greater force in such order as makes each paragraph lead to the next. Enumeration, rarely effective even in writing, is in speaking quite futile. Since in argument a given point thus contributes more by its position, there is greater need of care in the plan and adjustment of paragraphs (page 44).

The paragraph plan is quite distinct from the tabular analysis above (page 100). That is to survey the material; this is to organize the presentation. The analysis tells a debater how a certain fact or argument comes in logically. He knows where it is among his notes. He can put his finger on it. But the analysis does not tell him at what point in the course of his speech he can use that fact most effectively; it does not determine the order of his paragraphs. The analysis, for instance, always puts the main conclusion first, the supporting reasons afterwards; but often, for effective speaking or writing, the better order would be just the reverse; often we gain by leading up to a conclusion rather than by announcing it before we prove it. Again, the analysis takes no account of iteration and of bringing home at the close. Nor does it tell always how to proportion the space. One of the subordinate points — subordinate in the sense of proving a point indirectly — may deserve more time than a main point. The main points, of course, are the main things to bring out; but, since they depend on the reasons written under them in the analysis, it sometimes takes longer to establish these supporting reasons than to draw the conclusion. Finally, the analysis is often too elaborate to speak from. A speech needs a fairly simple plan in order to be followed. All this means, not that the system of analysis is defective, but that it is not meant to speak or write from. It is adapted rather to studying a subject than to presenting. No single plan can thoroughly well serve both these purposes when the reading required is at all extensive. Therefore it is better, after making an analysis, to make also a paragraph plan.

Nor is the making of two plans a waste of time. Really it is economical to do these two things separately instead of jumbling them together. And the two plans will not

differ entirely. The order of main points will probably be the same in both; it is only the supporting points that are likely to need rearrangement. But the paragraphs should be planned without reference to the numbers of the brief. A with all its subheadings may, perhaps, go well into one paragraph, while 1 under B, perhaps, needs a paragraph to itself, or even *b* under 2 under B. In planning paragraphs we are planning stages by which to lead our hearers along steadily. We are thinking solely of the coherence of the whole and of the amplification needed by a given part. By disregarding the divisions of the brief, which were made for another purpose, we set ourselves free to think solely of effective order.

An argumentative speech is said traditionally to consist of (1) introduction, (2) statement of facts, (3) proof, (4) refutation, (5) conclusion.¹ These are rather elements than parts. They give little hint of order. Refutation is not commonly separate from direct proof, nor necessarily subsequent. Even the statement of facts, though it naturally precedes proof, is not always given first in its entirety; and sometimes, by its emphasis on certain aspects, it is in effect argumentative. But there is suggestion in the traditional counsels as to the introduction and the conclusion. The object of the former is to make the audience sympathetic, attentive, and ready to learn.² This is so vital that it should never be left to mere formality. How to take hold of audience and subject so as to bring the two together promptly demands separate study for every speech.³ In

¹ The traditional Latin terms are: (1) exordium, (2) narratio, (3) confirmatio, (4) confutatio, (5) peroratio.

² In Cicero's words the traditional counsel is: *reddere auditores benevolos, attentos, dociles*.

³ For analysis of the persuasive opening of St. Paul's Areopagus speech (Acts xvii. 22) see the author's *The English Bible as a Guide to Writing*, pages 9-14.

particular there must be no risk of misunderstanding. However sympathetic and attentive, the audience usually needs at the start some information and such direction of thought as will open the import of the argument. Whether by removal of known misconceptions, or by connection with what is familiar, or by forecast, the minds of the audience must be opened. The conclusion, again, should not be thought of as a formality, a sort of Q. E. D. It may, indeed, iterate and recapitulate; but its great opportunity is to show how far the argument reaches, how wide are its relations, how deep its significance. This is why the peroration is traditionally the best place for appeal to feeling. Unless the audience is stirred at the end, the speech has probably failed. With the conclusion settled as the point of outlook at which to arrive, and with the introduction devised to make the start sure, fair progress has been made in organizing the material for effective order.

1. Speaking from Outline¹

For any kind of speech, the final stage of preparation had better be by speaking. The plan by paragraphs once settled, that paragraph which promises to be easiest may be developed orally, spoken off consecutively from beginning to end. This first oral form, though it may be rough and halting, will show whether the discussion of that point is full enough to be clear and lively enough to be interesting. Better still, it will begin the habit of public speaking by giving the sense of actually addressing an audience. Imagine hearers before you. Try by all means to make the point clear. Exemplify, taking up a card now and then if there is need to cite authority; iterate and contrast, putting the idea in different ways until it must be clear; illustrate by

¹ Sections 1, 2, and 3 are adapted from the author's *Writing and Speaking*.

some familiar and interesting parallel; and close by repeating the point emphatically (page 51). Instead of stopping to choose words or correct sentences, speak straight on to the end, deliberately, but without long pauses. Then, after thinking how to express the point more exactly or strongly, speak the whole paragraph a second time. In this way each paragraph may be developed orally in spare moments.

In addition, the whole speech should be spoken through without interruption from beginning to end. Oral preparation makes the speaker ready positively because he knows exactly what he is to say, negatively because he is not bound to recall it in certain fixed words. For by the method of oral development, though no paragraph will be said twice in exactly the same words, the whole will be at command. The important words will be readily remembered; and, what is of greater consequence, the speaker will be free to look his audience in the eye, confident of each thought, and of its place and method of development, and ready to adapt his words as he sees opportunity. The way to learn to speak is by speaking.

It is not by writing. To write a speech out in full *after* it has been prepared orally is excellent practise in revision; to write it out in full *before* it is spoken will probably condemn the writer either to read it aloud or to learn it by heart. Neither reading nor memorizing gives much practise in public speaking. Neither develops the real power of the platform, the power to appeal to an audience directly. In reading aloud, the manuscript seems to come between speaker and hearers, and often gives an impression of unreality, as if the words were those of a third person. In speaking from memory, the necessity of recalling the exact words distracts the speaker's attention from his hearers. He is not directly pleading with them; he is reciting to them; and they quickly feel the difference. It distracts his atten-

tion also from his own thoughts and feelings; for these he is no longer uttering spontaneously, but recalling in certain fixed expressions. No student will gain much power in public speaking so long as he confines himself to writing.

The preparation of a speech by speaking it several times from a paragraph outline has other marked advantages. At the very first trial it gives confidence by accustoming the speaker to the sound of his own voice. It takes off the edge of his first stage fright. Secondly, it teaches adaptation to the audience. Phrases that look well enough on paper often sound inappropriate or insincere when they are uttered. Speaking in preparation leads the speaker to adopt such language as he can put his heart into. Thirdly, it reveals the importance of paragraph emphasis as a means of making the whole coherent. This is much more important for speaking than for writing; and its importance is revealed by the act of speaking. As he speaks, one feels that he must not leave a point until he has clinched it; he feels that before passing to the next paragraph he must make his hearers quite sure of the paragraph that he is finishing.

Again, the oral development of a paragraph leads naturally to greater fulness. A statement that might suffice for reading may be too bare for hearing. Feeling this lack as he speaks, one naturally tends to iterate more, or to use more examples and illustrations. Speech must be fuller than writing. The very process of speaking may reveal the advantage of omitting some points of the original plan for the sake of expanding others. Here is a direct gain. A speech prevails, not by numbers, but by fulness. The idea of covering many points is often misleading. A speaker really covers no more points than he can make his hearers cover. He gains nothing by hurrying them over others. *Not many, but much*, is the motto for speech-making. Better

a few points impressed than many points hurried. An audience cannot hurry. To digest a point from hearing takes time. Preparation by speaking leads to due amplification.

But perhaps the greatest advantage of oral preparation has been mentioned already. It is freedom. "He is not tied down to his notes" is often said in praise of a speaker, and justly. When is a man tied down to his notes, and when not? Notes are usually necessary. The only question is how to use them. If the speaker has not merely arranged his notes and made a plan by paragraphs, but also written out his speech in full before speaking it at all, then he must remember certain words or falter. But if he has composed his speech orally from outline, he is quite free to adapt. The outline being easily remembered if it be short, or held in the hand if it be long, he is confident. He cannot lose his way; and in speech-making that is the only real danger. To lose a word is nothing. As a matter of fact, a speaker usually remembers the words most important to remember, the key-words or clue-words. These become fixed in his mind by recurring in the oral preparation. But, even if the word escapes, the idea remains and will suggest another word. Thus being free from bondage to words, he develops a thought or a feeling with the force of real discussion, man to man. Looking his hearers in the eye — the speaker from memory is often afraid to do that — he makes his point sure. If he sees that it is not quite grasped, he iterates; if he finds his way of talking too dry, or too solemn, or too humorous, he changes his style. For oral preparation gives a speaker freedom by giving him flexibility. He is free to adapt. He can expand or contract or modify without faltering. His speech is not cut and dried. It keeps its freshness. True, not all these desirable qualities will be achieved at once or without pains; but the point is, how shall our pains be spent? Preparation and practise are necessary

either way. To develop skill in public speaking, let the preparation and practice be largely oral.

2. Debate

The power of such direct, free speech is seen best in debate. *The idea of debate is to make the truth prevail over opposition.* To the audience it gives the opportunity of understanding a disputed matter fully by hearing both sides. Among all civilized peoples this is a recognized way of settling public questions. To the debater it gives the opportunity of fighting for his beliefs. In order to make his proposal prevail, he has to test both his own reasons and those of his opponents. Thus debate has a constant twofold value: it informs the audience in the liveliest possible way on matters in which they are concerned; and it develops in speakers a habit of clear and thorough thinking, careful investigation, and forcible presentation. Loose thinking, lazy study, halting presentation, cannot withstand attack. Debate puts a man on his mettle. He has to know his reasons and find ways of recommending them. Fortifying his convictions, he learns how to make others at least respect them, and, if he succeeds further, adopt them. Thus, of all kinds of public speaking, it calls most for thoroughness, directness, and practical adaptation. It is composition at close quarters.

So the *ideal debate is on a question really important* to the audience, and by speakers really convinced of the side for which they speak. Then audience and speakers alike have the greatest zest possible to any form of composition, — eagerness for the outcome. Though these conditions are not possible always, they should always be sought, and they can be attained very often. First, the question should be of real interest. It need not be a burning issue; it need not be new; but it should have real interest for the debaters and the audience. Nothing takes more life out of debate

than unreality. To fence with words over a matter that no one cares about, or without any audience to care, is uphill work. It may give a certain sort of practise; but at least as much practise can be had from live questions. What questions are alive depends on the community. Every large group of people, every town, every college, every society of more than a few members, buzzes with discussions. Whether these are on political questions suggested by the newspapers, or on questions of history suggested by books, or on town questions about a hospital or as to the number of saloons, or on college questions, they are alive if people care to talk and hear about them.

The manners of all public debate are the manners of Congress. A debater always first addresses the chair. He refers to his opponents only in the third person: "The speaker who has just taken his seat contended," "as the affirmative has asserted," "the second speaker for the negative," "our opponents," etc. He avoids all language that might seem to impute unworthy motives. He challenges a statement, not as "false" or "untrue," but as "mistaken," "unfounded," "unwarranted," etc. He faces, not his opponents, except rarely to put a question, but the audience. These are the courtesies of debate. Even in small companies they should not be thought irksome; for without such restraint debate easily lapses into mere wrangling. A debate implies that certain disputants have agreed to hear one another out fully, in turn, without interruption, and to leave the decision to a third party. Debate ought to be always earnest and never angry. Quarreling spoils the debate and affronts the audience. Without learning to give and take courteously, no one can learn to debate at all. To lose one's temper is often to lose one's case. The formal courtesies of debate merely embody this vital principle of restraint. They safeguard the high value of debate by

keeping it on a high plane. By prohibiting personalities they not only prevent quarreling; they also direct attention from the speakers to their arguments. They remind us that the object of attack is not the man, but the thing. They bid us rebut, not men, but arguments. They imply that the truth is more important than any man. The desire to display oneself, or to humble an opponent, should be sacrificed to the single aim of advancing one's cause. Thus the courtesies of debate will help the realization of its very object.

Honesty, being assumed as necessary to all public dealings, might seem hardly worth a pause, were it not obscured sometimes by the idea of cleverness. Many thoughtless people see in debate little more than an exhibition of sharp practise, evasion, twisting of words, and juggling with facts. And some debaters seem to be more occupied with laying snares for their opponents, or with wriggling out of an issue, than with discussing squarely. They seem less anxious for a battle than for an ambush. Now the old maxim that honesty is the best policy is nowhere stronger than in debate. This does not mean that debaters must always disclose their whole case at the start; for their opponents may fairly be kept alert, and unexpected turns are a fair test of strength. It does not mean that debaters should not expose to the full an adversary's omissions, inconsistencies, or hasty inferences; for the exposure of error directly advances truth, and the very life of debate depends on making one's own side strong against the other. Truth will be best served in the end by each debater's doing his very best for his own side. A debater is responsible, not for the decision, which belongs to the judges, but for the strength of his own case. But honesty in debate does mean a purpose to meet fairly all issues fairly involved in the question. If a point advantageous to your opponents

is not brought up by them, you are under no obligation to mention it. That is their lookout. Your duty is to your own side. But in preparation study, not how to evade your opponents' points by some twisting of the proposition, not how to meet them falsely by statistics that you know to be doubtful or insufficient, but how to meet them squarely. In preparation, again, study, not how much can possibly be admitted in a statement of facts by some ingenious interpretation, or some bias suspected in the audience or the judges, but how much should be admitted by an impartial student. Trickery is poor debate. It usually rebounds upon the tricksters; for their opponents will probably expose it, and it may even dim the value of their sound arguments by casting suspicion on their whole case. A spirit of fairness is of itself a recommendation. Trickery, even when it succeeds at the time, fails in the end. It fails by missing the larger and more important training of debate; and it tends to paralyze debate in that community by cutting a nerve.

a. THE METHOD OF DEBATE: REBUTTAL

The peculiarity of debate, as distinguished from other forms of public speaking, is give-and-take. Debate has to be adapted, not merely, as all speaking must be adapted, to the audience, but also to opponents. Therefore it must be of all forms of public speaking the most flexible. The debater must have a twofold readiness: (1) readiness to advance his case positively by urging those arguments for it which are his part; (2) readiness to advance his case negatively by meeting those arguments against it which have been urged by his opponents. The former demands in general merely the same preparation as for any other form of public speaking. In particular it demands some leeway. Instead of planning for the whole time assigned,

the debater leaves a margin for answering his opponents. Though a second speech is often provided for each speaker to this particular end, still he had better leave room for it also in his first speech. Thus the debate will be a debate throughout, not in great part a series of set speeches.

The latter kind of readiness is the readiness peculiar to debate. The life of debate is rebuttal. Preparation for rebuttal has been made already by the analysis; for this not only includes answers to the probable attacks of the other side, but also shows the bearing of these answers on the whole case (page 106). Rebuttal, to be effective, must be more than a number of separate answers to a number of separate objections. Like the positive arguments, it needs to be grouped under main points. Thus the analysis is most useful for reference in showing what a set of objections amounts to as a whole. By its aid a debater can more quickly group his rebuttal so as to show that the attack has left his case strong. Such readiness makes the rebuttal tell as a whole, not merely as a number of answers. Readiness to rebut consists, not merely in having many answers to many separate small points, but in knowing how to group these effectively.

For the same reason rebuttal should always close positively by showing that one's own side remains strong. Thus it should seize any good opportunity of reviewing briefly the whole course of the debate, so as to show how attack has been resisted, or where it has been weak, and to expose any weakness of positive argument on the other side as a whole. In a word, rebuttal is not confined to details. It may well consider also the whole course of the argument. And this it must do in the final speech of rebuttal that closes the whole debate. For the close of a debate, like the close of any other composition, must be strong and positive.

In detail the preparation for rebuttal is a process of analysis. It analyzes the argument of the opposition to see (1) what it is based on, and (2) what it amounts to. Rebuttal, that is, challenges an argument by asking either (1) *How do you know?* or (2) *What of it?* (page 11). In other words, it challenges either (1) the evidence, the basis of facts, or (2) the inference, the conclusion drawn from the facts. In one way or the other, sometimes in both, rebuttal analyzes an argument to test its worth.

Mexico should be annexed to the United States. As one argument in support of this proposition it is asserted that the Mexicans are too illiterate for stable self-government. How do you know? Show us by authoritative statistics that the percentage of illiteracy among the Mexicans is higher than among peoples having a stable self-government. Rebuttal never lets pass a general assertion; it always pins down to particulars, and to particulars well vouched. And what of it? Supposing a high percentage of illiteracy to be established, does that prove the advantage of annexation? Will Mexico lose or gain in the end by dealing herself with her problem of illiteracy? Shall we lose or gain by annexing an illiterate population? *Subsidies should be granted to United States vessels engaged in trade with South America.* In support of this proposition it is argued that transportation between the United States and South America is deficient. How do you know? From a senator's speech reported in a newspaper. But the number of sailings entered in the last report of the Commissioner of Navigation is —; and the Commissioner's figures are superior as evidence to the senator's general assertion. And what of it? Suppose the number of sailings to be smaller than is desirable. Would increasing the number of ships be the best way of increasing the trade? Do ships produce trade; or does trade produce ships?

Rebuttal, like all other argument in debate, should be real. It should meet the points that actually arise, not merely those that might arise. Preparation for debate must, indeed, forecast what the opponents will probably

bring forward; but it can rarely forecast exactly what will be the opponents' line. The debater must be ready for anything that may reasonably arise; but he must actually meet what actually does arise. Else debate becomes a series of set speeches. It ceases to be a combat. Skill in rebuttal comes largely from meeting opportunities. To this end the first means is a habit of listening. A good debater is a good listener. He is quick to seize what his opponent says — not the ten or dozen things that he says, but the single thing, or the few things, in which they may be all summed up (page 144). He learns to analyze and summarize as he hears. Now if, on the contrary, he is absorbed in what he proposed to say himself, or if the first point made by his opponent sets him to running nervously over his notes, he is likely to lose his chance. The only way to meet the actual opportunities of debate is to listen, to listen intently, to seize the main point, and then to attack that.

This does not involve abandoning one's main line of argument. If that has been well considered, it will remain good. But no line of argument should be planned to fill the whole time. Space should be left for adjusting the incidental rebuttal according to the actual turn of the debate, and for expanding the positive argument where it is most heavily attacked. Far from abandoning his main line, a debater should never let himself be drawn aside; but to turn aside is very different from turning to meet an important argument. For any important argument in a well prepared debate can always be brought to bear on one's own case. Such adjustment demands alertness; and alertness begins in cultivating a habit of listening. Only by listening can a debater learn to measure quickly which arguments demand most attention, and how to rebut them so as to show their relation to his own positive argument.

Debate combines into one effective whole not merely many arguments, but several persons. Its success depends less on brilliant individual speeches than on the working together of all. It prevails by combination. "My colleague has shown you" — "We have insisted throughout this debate" — words like these are not merely formal; they remind us that a debate must hang together. Division of labor should lighten research by making each debater responsible for one main group of arguments and the facts on which they are based. And in rebuttal each debater may well take care of those points which fall within his own field. But the case as a whole should be planned by all and familiar to each in its main bearings. Thus any speaker can briefly rebut an argument which will be met in detail by his colleague who has that group in charge, but which seems to demand some answer at once. Each debater, regarding himself as a part, should be ready to do whatever the debate needs. Though he may foresee a chance for eloquence on a certain point, he must not hesitate, if that point is slighted, to touch it lightly for the sake of spending himself where he is needed. Each debater should make his own points sure, and still be ready to help the others if the main attack falls on them. Thus debate has the force and the pleasure of fellowship in contest.

3. Speeches on Occasions

Public speaking is of three general kinds, according as it is directed toward the past, the future, or the present. The first kind, looking at the past, is *forensic* oratory, the oratory of lawyers in court. Its object is to determine in a dispute just what happened, and whether it was right or wrong according to the law. The second kind, looking at the future, is *deliberative* oratory, the oratory of Congress and of all other public discussion. Its object is to determine in

a dispute just what ought to be done; i.e., whether a proposed measure is wise or unwise, expedient or inexpedient. The third kind, *occasional* oratory, looking at the present, seeks to make an audience realize the significance of an occasion. The first kind is too technical for consideration here. The second has been discussed already under the head of debate. We must now consider the third, speeches on occasions.

Perhaps the instances of this most familiar to Americans are Webster's first oration at Bunker Hill, and Lincoln's at the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg; to Frenchmen, the funeral orations of Bossuet. At once we recognize in these speeches a distinct kind of public speaking. The object is not so much to prove or to explain as to interpret. The speaker tries not so much to make us understand as to make us feel. His aim is to bring some event home, to mark some anniversary or other public commemoration upon our hearts, to improve, as the good old-fashioned phrase puts it, — to improve the occasion. It has long been our American habit to observe occasions in this way. The annual Fourth-of-July oration has returned after a period of noisier demonstrations. The birthdays of Washington and of Lincoln, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving Day among Americans abroad, and other public holidays, have always been commemorated by speeches. The unveiling of a tablet, the completion of a monument, the presentation of a stand of colors or a loving-cup, school or college "commencements," are usually marked in the same way. The public dinners of a society would be otherwise incomplete. Many sermons are occasional speeches. In short, there are few days on which the newspaper does not report some speech on an occasion; and among such speeches we find some of the best oratory of any period.

How can an occasional speech be original? Evidently not by conveying new information; for the occasion is usually old enough, either the anniversary of an event often commemorated, or similar to a hundred other occasions. Every Commencement, for instance, is much like every other Commencement. But every audience is somewhat different from every other audience; every community has some interests peculiar to itself or to the time of speaking; and every speaker sees through his own eyes. There is the chance for originality. The subject may be old; but it has never before been presented to those people by that speaker, and this year gives it a significance unthought of last year. Thus occasional speeches offer valuable training in adaptation. Especial attention should be given to the tone, or manner; for the chief merit of an occasional speech is appropriateness. Keeping a clear progress of thought, avoid dividing the speech in the formal manner proper to debate. The commemoration of a great man should never be a chronological summary of his life. Besides being tedious, that is too much like reciting from the cyclopedia. Select such aspects of his character and career as appeal most to you and promise to touch the audience at that particular time. Occasional speeches give an opportunity, impossible in debate, for description. There is no better way of impressing the democratic spirit of Lincoln, for instance, than by describing certain incidents. The younger the audience, the more room for description. The constant aim of an occasional speech is to rekindle interest in the subject by adapting it to the audience and the time. Its originality consists in a message felt by the speaker and brought home to the hearers. It is a perennial means of leadership.

4. Revision of Oral Address

Though it had better not be written out in full until it is no more to be spoken, a speech may meantime be revised. Oral revision will give practise in enunciation, in the placing of the voice, in variation of pitch. Beyond these physical matters revision may proceed both orally and by writing to readjust paragraphs and sentences and to sharpen the diction. Revision of oral paragraphs most frequently means either amplification for clearness or iteration at the end for emphasis and transition (page 51). Revision of oral sentences is guided generally by such familiarity with the sound of good oral prose as comes from reading aloud and reciting. Specifically, change in the cadence, or rhythm of the sentence close, may improve either the emphasis of the sentence (page 59) or the variety of the paragraph. For monotony means sameness in sentence rhythm.

The writing of certain passages may be helpful in such revision and even necessary in securing precision, especially in definitions and distinctions. Therefore the statement of facts naturally makes more use of writing in both preparation and revision. Scrutiny of definitions is the only way to avoid begging the question. Expressions that give apparent support to a proposition by merely stating it in other terms are said to "beg the question." *The government of England is more representative than ours; for it answers more truly the will of the people.* The second member of that sentence begs the question by bringing forward as an argument what is really nothing but a restatement. "Answers more truly the will of the people," is only another way of saying, "more representative." *Writing cannot be taught. If a man has the natural ability to write, he will learn for himself; if he has not, no teaching will make him a writer.* This is more plausible; but, when we scrutinize the terms, we find that *writing* in

the first sentence covers more than *write* and *writer* in the second. The first sentence is a proposition about writing in general. The second sentence tries to prove this by assertions about that particular excellence in writing which is called literary. Therefore the opponent should ask at once, What do you mean by *writing*? If you mean literature, there is little debate left. We are not here to maintain that the writing of poetry, for instance, can be taught. But if you mean writing in general, including reports, letters, essays, speeches, descriptions, etc., then your reason does not apply. It begs the question.

Besides precision, the revision of words has to consider aptness. A speech right enough in plan and precision may be wrong in tone. That is, words must be scrutinized not only as to how they are meant, but also as to how they will be received. Though the tone of the whole speech must be determined by the tact and experience of the individual, it is worth while to remember that often an unfortunate impression can be avoided by revision of a single passage, or even of a few words. The idea is not, of course, to compromise one's intention, but to open the way for it by using words that do not arouse prejudice.

Beyond both precision and aptness in words is the idea of force. A speech well planned and expressed both precisely and aptly might still fail to move. Though such a defect could never be in words only, but always in the conception behind them, still it can be reached in revision through words. Why does this passage sound cold? Why does the statement here seem inadequate to the importance of the point? How shall this be brought home? Such questions should at once suggest a larger use of the concrete (page 85). What hearers may find unfamiliar or doubtful they need to imagine, to visualize as if it were enacted before them. Evidence must be formulated, of course; but it

must also be conveyed. The speaker's task includes the bringing of his reasoning home, the translation of the abstract into the concrete. Thus Lincoln in rebutting Douglas brings home the distinction between political equality and social equality.

But the Judge (Douglas) will have it that if we do not confess that there is a sort of inequality between the white and black races which justifies us in making them slaves, we must then insist that there is a degree of equality that requires us to make them our wives.

— *Debate with Douglas at Galesburgh, October 7, 1858.*

So Henry W. Grady made a northern audience see the barrier interposed by the negro problem to immigration from the North into the South.

That, Sir, is the picture and the promise of my home — a land better and fairer than I have told you, and yet but fit setting, in its material excellence, for the loyal and gentle quality of its citizenship. Against that, Sir, we have New England, recruiting the Republic from its sturdy loins, shaking from its overcrowded hives new swarms of workers, and touching this land all over with its energy and its courage. And yet, while in the El Dorado of which I have told you, but fifteen per cent. of lands are cultivated, its mines scarcely touched, and its population so scant that, were it set equidistant, the sound of the human voice could not be heard from Virginia to Texas; while on the threshold of nearly every house in New England stands a son, seeking with troubled eyes some new land to which to carry his modest patrimony, — the strange fact remains that in 1880 the South had fewer Northern-born citizens than she had in 1870 — fewer in 1870 than in 1860. Why is this? Why is it, Sir, though the sectional line be now but a mist that the breath may dispel, fewer men of the North have crossed over it to the South than when it was crimson with the best blood of the Republic, or even when the slaveholder stood guard every inch of its way?

There can be but one answer. It is the very problem we are now to consider. The key that opens that problem will unlock to the world the fairer half of this Republic, and free the halted feet of thousands whose eyes are already kindled with its beauty.

— *Speech at the Annual Banquet of the Merchants' Association,*
Boston, December, 1889.

Such concreteness is just as much a habit of experienced orators as is care in evidence and cogency of arrangement. How did Burke present his argument from American fisheries? Not by statistics alone, but by such concrete words as stirred the sympathy of his hearers by suggesting pictures to their imagination.

And pray, Sir, what in the world is equal to it? Pass by the other parts, and look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the whale fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay and Davis' Straits, whilst we are looking for them beneath the Arctic Circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold, that they are at the Antipodes, and engaged under the frozen Serpent of the South. Falkland Island, which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting-place in the progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the equinoctial heat more discouraging to them than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We know that whilst some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil.

— BURKE, *Conciliation with America*, paragraph 30.

Such appeal by concrete words he makes again and again, now in a single sentence, now in a whole passage:

Already they have topped the Appalachian mountains. From thence they behold before them an immense plain, one vast, rich, level meadow, a square of five hundred miles. Over this they

would wander without a possibility of restraint; they would change their manners with the habits of their life; they would soon forget a government by which they were disowned; would become hordes of English Tartars; and, pouring down upon your unfortified frontiers a fierce and irresistible cavalry, become masters of your governors and your counsellors, your collectors and comptrollers, and of all the slaves that adhered to them. Such would, and in no long time must, be the attempt to forbid as a crime, and to suppress as an evil, the command and blessing of Providence, "Increase and multiply." Such would be the happy result of an endeavour to keep as a lair of wild beasts that earth which God, by an express charter, has given to the children of men.

— *Conciliation with America*, paragraph 51.

Yet Burke was most logical of speakers. Analysis shows his briefs to be models, and the march of his paragraphs irresistible. His chief strength is his movement; but his words also are no less carefully adapted to bring each point home. Swift, in attempting to arouse Ireland against a certain coinage act, was even more specifically concrete; for he had to deal with people of much less average education than Burke addressed in Parliament. Thus Swift's *Drapier's Letters* show in written address a reliance on such simple, homely words of feeling as appeal to the imagination.

And let me in the next place apply myself particularly to you who are the poorer sort of tradesmen. Perhaps you may think you will not be so great losers as the rich if these halfpence should pass; because you seldom see any silver, and your customers come to your shops or stalls with nothing but brass, which you likewise find hard to be got. But you may take my word, whenever this money gains footing among you, you will be utterly undone. If you carry these halfpence to a shop for tobacco or brandy, or any other thing that you want, the shopkeeper will advance his goods accordingly, or else he must break and leave the key under the door. "Do you think I will sell you a yard of tenpenny stuff for

twenty of Mr. Wood's halfpence? No, not under 200 at least; neither will I be at the trouble of counting, but weigh them in a lump." I will tell you one thing further, that if Mr. Wood's project should take, it would ruin even our beggars; for when I give a beggar a halfpenny, it will quench his thirst, or go a good way to fill his belly; but the twelfth part of a halfpenny will do him no more service than if I should give him three pins out of my sleeve.

III. FORMS OF WRITTEN ARGUMENT

Written argument in the field of forensic (page 147) has two recognized forms: the brief, and the opinion of court. A brief is a printed summary of an argument to be presented in detail orally. Though essentially like the tabular analysis above (page 100), it is less strict in form and generally more consecutive. Usually it is divided into (1) statement of facts and (2) argument. Its object being to present in print whatever can be better seen than heard, it is quite exhaustive in citation. Of opinions, the most significant, naturally, emanate from the Supreme Court. The opinions of Chief Justice Marshall interpreting the Constitution during the early years of the nation are models no less of composition than of statesmanship. Taking a large survey, unfolding the general implications of the particular case, they reach at their best that outlook which is characteristic of great oratory. The high standard of composition thus set at the beginning seems to have stimulated later opinions. In many cases their survey of public policy is so broad as to command the attention of the whole country, as is clear from the fact that they are usually printed by every important newspaper in full.

The field of occasional address is pre-eminently oral. Written commemorations — beyond those that have already been spoken — are rare; and of these few most are of a

single form, the editorial.¹ Once in a while an occasion will inspire an "open letter," as detraction of Father Damien roused Stevenson. For written appeal the great field is the deliberative, the field of live issues and public questions. These are discussed at length in newspaper supplement articles, in magazine or review articles, and even in books; but for influence on public opinion and action far the most important form of written address is the daily newspaper editorial. Often largely expository, it is usually argumentative also, and, whether by argument or by other appeal, almost always aims at persuasion. To be persuasive briefly, without any of the aids of personal presence, and upon the general public, is a task very different from that of addressing a particular audience orally. The necessary terseness cannot be achieved by dry formula; in written appeal, as in spoken, there is need of concreteness. Though there can be no separable introduction, there is all the more urgent need of taking hold suggestively. And no form of composition depends more upon paragraph emphasis (page 51), upon impressing the message in a memorable close. In spite of these difficulties, or perhaps because of them, no form better repays practise. For it comprises within its small compass all the essential elements of persuasion.

¹ A striking instance of commemorative editorial is "On Bastille Day" in the *New York Tribune* of July 14, 1915.

PART II
COMPOSITION OF IMAGES

CHAPTER IV

THE METHODS OF IMAGINATIVE COMPOSITION (DESCRIPTION)

AN image is the recollection of a sensation, the calling to mind of something seen, heard, smelt, tasted, touched, as if it were present to the senses. Imaginative expression, or imagery in the widest meaning of the word, is expression in terms of sensation. The expression of an idea is an abstract generalization; of an image, is concretely specific. *Poverty* expresses an idea, abstract and general; *squalor*, an idea less abstract and general; *dirty rag*, an image concretely specific. The word *sound*, as used above, is abstract and general; *voice* is less abstract, but not specific; *scream*, *mutter*, *coo*, *hoarse*, *hiss*, are concrete. Such terms of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, arising from the imagination of a writer, in turn arouse imagination in the reader.

Imaginative realization and imaginative appeal, then, imply terms of sensation, concreteness, imagery. That these are necessary to bring information and argument home to feeling has been seen again and again (pages 30, 53). In such composition imaginative expression is incidental; there is another field of composition in which it is constant, the field of poems, stories, and plays. Here expression is habitually concrete because imagination controls the method. The immediate object of such composition is to make the reader feel what the writer feels by seeing and hearing in imagination what the writer sees and hears. Far from precluding thought, such composition stimulates thought; but this it does by suggestion, indirectly. What

it presents directly is not ideas, but images. A speech or an essay, however imaginative in parts, proceeds as a whole from idea to idea. Its method is by paragraphs. Not so a poem, story, or play; none of these proceeds by paragraphs, for imaginative composition is fundamentally the ordering, not of ideas, but of images. The forms of poetry, story, and drama, various as they are, all alike differ from the forms of discussion in certain general habits of composition. This fundamental two-fold division is expressed in the traditional terms rhetoric and poetic. For by poetic the ancients meant, not verse, nor merely poetry in the narrower sense, but also story and especially drama. Thus poetic is still a suggestive general term for all imaginative composition in words.

What the ancients thought of first as poetic is drama; that is, they thought first of imaginative composition in the larger aspects of movement. This is not because Greek plays were in verse. That Shakspeare's plays are in verse does, indeed, immeasurably enhance their poetic effect; but it does not bring them within the field of poetic, any more than the prose of most modern plays rules them out. For drama, whatever its language, is poetic as composition. So are most forms, ancient or modern, of story. Their general difference from drama is that their methods are not of actual representation, but of suggestion. The stories that have survived are those that are most suggestive to the imagination, that conjure up significant persons and scenes most vividly. Story-telling is an imaginative attempt to make the hearer or reader imagine himself in that situation at least as an observer, often as a participant. We enjoy those stories most, perhaps, in which we are made to imagine ourselves the actors. The permanent interest of fiction, in a book as well as on the stage, is that it provides vicarious experience. Thus poetic interprets life, but not in the ways

of rhetoric. The latter gives us ideas about life; the former suggests life itself. Rhetoric tries to tell us how to live; poetic tries to widen and deepen our living by enriching experience through imagination.

That there are certain fundamental habits underlying different forms of imaginative composition in words we are reminded by such poems as Browning's *Meeting at Night*. Here a few stanzas carry to a higher degree the same methods of suggestion as those used with greater fulness in many short stories. Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* has much the same methods and effects as a novel. A poem, that is, may be a story carried to its highest power. This same poem of Chaucer's by a movement distinctly dramatic brings together in one work all the three main forms of poetic: story, drama, and poetry. In all these forms, whether in verse or in prose, appear certain constant habits; and the experience of writing the simplest story is, so far as it goes, a poetic experience. Essentially the poetic experience consists of imagination, interpretation, and movement.

I. IMAGINATION

1. Imagination as Insight

Imagination means primarily having images. It means being aware of sights, sounds, and smells; and therefore it means observation. People who suppose imagination to be quite distinct from observation have observed very little. On the one hand, imagination is based on sensory images; on the other hand, observation is not merely sense impression, not merely staring and touching, not merely sight; it is insight. Imagination is based on observation, and observation is guided and interpreted by imagination. The two are complementary. The first value of imagination is sympathy, our entering emotionally into what we

see. Though we must be careful and honest, able to tell what we see without distorting it by what we feel, we cannot see much without feeling. Insight implies sympathy — or at least antipathy. This is true especially of observation of people, and people are the principal subjects of writing. As we seek human interest for our writing, so we need human interest for our observation: Awareness depends on sympathy.

From observation comes also imaginative originality. This will sound like paradox to those who think of imagination only as invention. *Imaginative* does not mean *imaginary*; nor is it limited to the inventive type of mind. Even invention depends for any plausibility ultimately on observation; but invention in writing is of far less importance than is commonly supposed by amateurs. Shakspeare's disregard of it was not exceptional. Invention shows ingenuity; it is entertaining; it is important in such minor forms as farce and detective story; but it is hardly ever essential. Even plot is not pure invention; and plot is usually less important than characterization, from which it often springs. "Creation" of character is not invention, but the highest reach of observation. We measure characterization in a play or story as we measure the conception of a lyric, by what we call its truth to life, that is by its insight.

SAP

Strong as the sea, and silent as the grave,
It ebbs and flows unseen;
Flooding the earth — a fragrant tidal wave —
With mist of deepening green.¹

And in general originality is deeper insight. Such interpretative observation is directly promoted by imaginative

¹ From *Poems* by John B. Tabb, Boston, 1895.

expression. We look and listen more attentively in order to be specifically concrete; for the language of all imaginative composition, whatever the form, is concrete. Poetic speaks in terms of sensation because poetry, as Aristotle says, is an imitation of life.

2. Imaginative Expression as Concrete

In concrete expression drama goes beyond the other forms of poetic; for drama is actual representation. This demands of the playwright a particular faculty of visualizing, and of his play such forms of expression as appeal primarily to the eye. A play is a composition that we go not so much to hear as to see. The action, attitude, and gesture of a story on the stage must not be lost from the same story told in a book; else the story becomes dull, or even fails entirely. For story as well as drama is included in what Aristotle means by imitation. But instead of being literally seen as in the theater, action, attitude, gesture, and setting in a story have to be imagined. The task of the story-writer, then, is to make me imagine, to conjure up in my mind's eye, to suggest. All forms of imaginative composition in words, except drama, rely mainly on suggestion. Suggestiveness is the object of concreteness; for imagery, whether figurative or literal, springs from the desire to suggest images. And not only the choice of words, but the course or movement of the composition is controlled by the idea of suggestion.

Imaginative suggestion in language and in method covers what is most commonly meant by description. The word description is used also, and no less properly, of statistical specification, as in a mortgage deed, an inventory, or other bare enumeration of details. The language and method of such description are adjusted, of course, to their object, which is information. They differ so sharply from imagina-

tive suggestion as to make the latter stand out by contrast. No difference in expression can be more striking, for instance, than that between two descriptions of a motor-boat, aeroplane, or other locomotive machine, one designed to explain it, the other to suggest it to the imagination.

The latter sort of writing is more commonly meant by the word description; but the term is equivocal, and since description in the latter sense is usually narrative, we have gained little by using the word as if it were distinctive. The term description will serve our purposes only if we keep in mind, first, that description in this sense is quite distinct from description in the other, and, secondly, that it is not distinct from story. Description is merely story considered in one of its aspects, namely as imaginative realization. In this, stories are more or less abundant; we may say that a story has more or less description, or that it has this or that method of description; but some description it must have, nor is there any description in this sense which is not some form of story.

Imaginative suggestiveness may come from sheer abundance of the concrete. For suggestion, though it can never vie with representation in distinctness and intensity, has a compensation in range. A painting presents color, a statue form, a dance rhythm, more distinctly than any of these groups of sensations can be suggested in words; but the suggestion in words may be more various than any one of them, including appeals to all the senses in rapid succession. Thus the first lesson of imaginative writing is, Be abundantly concrete. Use words — verbs as well as adjectives and nouns — not of sentiment, but of sensation. Richness of suggestion is sometimes enough of itself, without more art, to stimulate imaginative activity, to give us that illusion of being in the situation described which we desire when we read stories and poems. As fiction has its chief value

in widening emotional experience, so its fundamental process is to call up images of physical experiences.

The following reminiscences of old Paris, which are hardly more than a list, show the suggestive power of mere concreteness.

And the way to these was by long, tortuous, busy thoroughfares, most irregularly flagged, and all alive with strange, delightful people in blue blouses, brown woolen tricots, wooden shoes, red and white cotton nightcaps, rags and patches; most graceful girls, with pretty, self-respecting feet, and flashing eyes, and no head-dress but their own hair; gay, fat hags, all smile; thin hags, with faces of appalling wickedness or misery; precociously witty little gutter imps of either sex; and such cripples! jovial hunchbacks, lusty blind beggars, merry creeping paralytics, scrofulous wretches who joked and punned about their sores; light-hearted, genial mendicant monsters without arms or legs, who went ramping through the mud on their bellies, from one underground wineshop to another; and blue-chinned priests and barefooted brown monks and demure Sisters of Charity, and here and there a jolly chiffonnier with his hook, and his knap-basket behind; or a cuirassier, or a gigantic carbineer, or gay little "Hunter of Africa," or a couple of bold gendarmes riding abreast, with their towering black *bonnets à poil*; or a pair of pathetic little red-legged soldiers, conscripts just fresh from the country, with innocent light eyes and straw-colored hair and freckled brown faces, walking hand in hand, and staring at all the pork-butchers' shops — and sometimes at the pork-butcher's wife!

Then a proletarian wedding procession — headed by the bride and bridegroom, an ungainly pair in their Sunday best — all singing noisily together. Then a pauper funeral, or a covered stretcher, followed by sympathetic eyes, on its way to the Hôtel-Dieu; or the last sacrament, with bell and candle, bound for the bedside of some humble agonizer *in extremis* — and we all uncovered as it went by.

And then, for a running accompaniment of sound, the clanging chimes, the itinerant street-criers, the tinkle of the *marchand de*

coco, the drum, the *cor de chasse*, the organ of Barbary, the ubiquitous pet parrot, the knife-grinder, the bawling fried-potato monger, and, most amusing of all, the poodle-clipper and his son, strophe and antistrophe, for every minute the little boy would yell out in his shrill treble that his father clipped poodles for thirty sous, and was competent also to undertake the management of refractory tomcats, upon which the father would growl in his solemn bass, "My son speaks the truth" — *L'enfant dit vrai!*

And rising above the general cacophony the din of the eternally cracking whip, of the heavy cart-wheel jolting over the uneven stones, the stamp and neigh of the spirited little French cart-horse and the music of his many bells, and the cursing and swearing and *hue! dia!* of his driver! It was all entrancing.

— GEORGE DU MAURIER, *Peter Ibbetson*.

So it is concreteness that illuminates diaries and letters, vivifying even humdrum happenings by suggesting their colors and sounds. The Reverend Robert Robinson of Cambridge, unknown to fame and doubtless unimportant to history, with even less attention to form makes himself almost as visible to our imaginations as if he were a person in a novel.

— went to the other plough — picked up some wool and tied over the traces — mended a horse-tree, tied a thong to the plough-hammer — went to see which lands want ploughing first — sat down under a bush — wondered how any man could be so silly as to call me *reverend* — read two verses and thought of his loving-kindness in the midst of his temple — gave out "Come, all harmonious tongues" and set Mount Ephraim tune — rose up — whistled — the dogs wagged their tails, and on we went — got home — dinner ready — filled the pipe — drank some milk, and fell asleep — woke by the carpenter for some slats, which the sawyer must cut — The Reverend Messrs. A. in a coat, B. in a gown of black, and C. in one of purple, came to drink tea, and to settle whether Gomer was the father of the Celts and Gauls and Britons, or only the uncle — proof sheet from Mr. Archdeacon — corrected it —

washed — dressed — went to meeting and preached from, *The end of all things is at hand; be ye sober and watch unto prayer* — found a dear brother *reverence* there, who went home with me, and edified us all out of Solomon's Song, with a dish of tripe out of Leviticus and a golden candlestick out of Exodus.

— ROBERT ROBINSON to an "Old Friend," Chesterton, May 26, 1784 (reprinted by E. V. LUCAS, *The Gentlest Art*, page 277).

These notes — for they are no more — carry because they are specific, not statistically, but concretely. As statistics the details are beneath notice; as images they give us some imaginative experience of a city crowd or of rural remoteness. The imaginative realization of *Robinson Crusoe* is on a higher plane; but it is essentially the same in kind. So are the suggestions of a good letter, such as this of Thackeray's.

1st November, 1848.

Dear Mrs. Brookfield:

I was at Oxford by the time your dinner was over, and found eight or nine jovial gentlemen in black feasting in the common room and drinking port wine solemnly. . . . And we walked in the park with much profit, surveying the great copper-coloured trees, and the glum old bridge and pillar, and Rosamond's Well, and the queer, grand, ugly but magnificent house, a piece of splendid barbarism, yet grand and imposing somehow, like a chief rad-dled over with war-paint and attired with careful hideousness. . . . After Blenheim I went to Magdalen Chapel to a High Mass there. O cherubim and seraphim, how you would like it! The chapel is the most sumptuous edifice, carved and frittered over with the richest stone-work like the lace of a lady's boudoir. The windows . . . make a sort of rich twilight in the church, which is lighted up by a multitude of wax candles in gold sconces, and you say your prayers in carved stalls wadded with velvet cushions. . . .

W. M. T.

Such expression, distinct from statistics, is equally distinct from general or abstract summary. The so-called

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle thus reports the Battle of Maldon in the year 991.

This year came Unlaf (Olaf Tryggvason) with ninety-three ships to Staines and laid waste all around; and thence he went to Sandwich, and thence to Ipswich, and harried it all, and so to Maldon, and there Byrhtnoth the earl and his force came against him and fought with him; and there they slew the earl and kept the battle-field. And in that year they decided to pay tribute for the first time to the Danes, on account of the great terror which they wrought on the sea-coast. — COOK and TINKER'S *Translations from Old English Poetry*, page 31.

This general summary gives us clear ideas, but very few images. When we call it bald, we mean that it lacks suggestion. For some realization of this fight we turn from chronicle to poetry.

Strode the battle-wolves bold through the water;
West over Panta waded the pirates;
Carried their shields o'er the shining waves;
Safely their lindenwoods landed the sailors.
Byrhtnoth awaited them, braced for the onslaught,
Haughty and bold at the head of his band,
Bade them build the bristling war-hedge,
Shield against shield, to shatter the enemy.
Near was the battle, now for the glory,
Now for the death of the doomed in the field.
Swelled the war-cry, circled the ravens,
Screamed the eagle, eager for prey;
Sped from the hand the hard-forged spear-head,
Showers of darts, sharp from the grind-stone.
Bows were busy, bolt stuck in buckler.

— PANCOAST and SPAETH'S *Early English Poems*, page 86.

The first of the following passages, though twice as long as the second, is much fainter because much less concrete.

I was yesterday about sunset walking in the open fields, till the night insensibly fell upon me. I at first amused myself with all the richness and variety of colours which appeared in the western parts of heaven. In proportion as they faded away and went out, several stars and planets appeared one after another, till the whole firmament was in a glow. The blueness of the ether was exceedingly heightened and enlivened by the season of the year and by the rays of all those luminaries that passed through it. The galaxy appeared in its most beautiful white. To complete the scene, the full moon rose at length in that clouded majesty which Milton takes notice of, and opened to the eye a new picture of nature, which was more finely shaded, and disposed among softer lights, than that which the sun had before discovered to us.

— ADDISON, *Spectator*, 565.

. . . when the sun approaches toward the gates of the morning he first opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of darkness, and gives light to a cock, and calls up the lark to matins, and by and by gilds the fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns, like those which decked the brow of Moses when he was forced to wear a veil because himself had seen the face of God.

— JEREMY TAYLOR, *Holy Dying*, Chapter i.

Richness, variety, majesty, are abstract terms; nor is there anywhere in this description a phrase so specifically concrete as *gilds the fringes* and *peeps over*. The difference is not that the second passage is in the ordinary sense figurative, but only that it is specific and concrete, whereas the former is largely general and abstract. The following sentence, which has no figures, is none the less vivid.

Suppose a man to dig up a galleon on the Coromandel coast, his rakish schooner keeping the while an offing under easy sail, and he, by the blaze of a great fire of wreckwood, to measure ingots by the bucketful on the uproarious beach.

— STEVENSON, *The Wrecker*, Chapter vii.

Suppose a man to raise a treasure ship in the tropics and divide the booty on the shore. The idea is the same; but what a difference in the realization!

Suggestive expression, then, must proceed from lively impression. When we say that concrete words are sharp, lively, vivid, or forcible, we imply not only that they suggest distinct images to a reader, but that they spring from sharp sensations in the writer. Sharp sensations, in turn, imply sensitiveness and attention — in a word, observation. Thus the flatness of the following description is ultimately laziness. The writer has not taken the trouble to describe; instead he has repeated vague generalities.

When we arrived at the middle of the bridge we were struck by the extent of the view. As far as the eye could reach stretched the beautiful expanse of water between the two crowded cities. The water was dotted with vessels of every sort and description. Here was a grand ocean steamship starting on its voyage across the broad Atlantic and filled with its many passengers. There was a tugboat, behind which came several barges in tow. The ferry boats plied back and forth at frequent intervals, bearing crowds of passengers in either direction. The tall buildings reminded us of the manifold business activities of the metropolis, and beside the wharves were the sailing vessels of the coasting trade. Directly before us was Governor's Island with its old fort and the houses of the officers, looking attractive among the surrounding trees. Everything suggested a great field of activity, and at the same time pleased the eye by light and color.

What bird is described in the following?

The bird was not far away in the bushy wood, and its singing was most charming. It trilled and gurgled and whistled with many quick and unexpected changes. The song had the freedom and strength of noble music. Some of the notes were of the utmost purity and clearness, and they seemed to penetrate into all the region about.

— CLIFTON JOHNSTON, *Among English Hedgerows*, pages 46-47.

Though we say rightly that these descriptions fail for lack of specific concreteness, we mean further that the writer was not really observing. For it is inattention, haste, or insincerity that makes expression conventional or trite.

It was a gorgeous moonlight night out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. The stars seemed brighter than usual and sparkled like brilliant diamonds in the sky. The moon shone on the water, giving it a silvery look; and the combination of nature in all its moonlight glory and the peacefulness of the whole scene formed a sight never to be forgotten. Suddenly the cry of "Man overboard!" broke the stillness of the night, and in a second all was in an uproar. The sound of running feet, the sharp cries of the sailors in the act of lowering the life-boat, and the tense excitement of the passengers formed a striking contrast to the scene a few minutes before. Complete silence had changed into utter pandemonium.

This description, in design and in phrase, is as conventional as a valentine or a wedding cake. When we say that it is not convincing we mean that we receive no illusion of reality, that the expression does not seem true to impression. For suggestiveness is derived finally from truth. The object of imaginative composition in words, as of painting, is to make us see more in life.

Most eloquently suggestive, perhaps, of all those specific words of sensation which we call concrete are the ones which suggest the movements, attitudes, gesture, and speech of people. Thus Chaucer describes dramatically his Canterbury pilgrims, making his prologue and interludes more vivid than the tales themselves. He even describes himself through the challenge of the host.

. . . Our hoste japen tho bigan,
And than at erst he loked upon me,
And seyde thus, "what man artow?" quod he.

Thou lokest as thou woldest finde an hare;
 For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.
 Approche neer and loke up merily.
 Now war yow, sirs, and lat this man have place.
 He in the waast is shape as wel as I;
 This were a popet in an arm t'enbrace."

Canterbury Tales, 1883-1891.

So the host describes his own wife.

. . . Whan I bete my knaves,
 She bringth me forth the grete clobbed staves,
 And cryeth, "slee the dogges everichoon,
 And brek hem, bothe bak and every boon."
 And if that any neighebor of myne
 Wol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne,
 Or be so hardy to hir to trespase,
 Whan she comth hoom, she rampeth in my face,
 And cryeth, "false coward, wreak thy wyf!"

Canterbury Tales, 3087-3095.

So we can see the pardoner preaching.

I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet,
 And whan the lewed peple is doun yset,
 I preche so as ye han herd bifore
 And telle an hundred false japes more.
 Than peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke,
 And est and west upon the peple I bekke
 As doth a dowve sitting on a berne.
 Myn hondes and my tonge goon so yerne
 That it is joye to see my businesse.

Canterbury Tales, 12326-12334.

Abundance of the same sort of detail — of attitude, physical manner, speech, and especially gesture — enlivens so different a work as the *Sentimental Journey*. Thus, for example, Sterne vivifies the interview with the mendicant monk.

The moment I cast my eyes upon him, I was predetermined not to give him a single sou; and accordingly I put my purse into my pocket, buttoned it up, set myself a little more upon my centre, and advanced up gravely to him. There was something, I fear, forbidding in my look. . . . When he had entered the room three paces, he stood still; and, laying his left hand upon his breast (a slender white staff with which he journeyed being in his right), when I had got close up to him, he introduced himself with the little story of the wants of his convent and the poverty of his order. . . . "Tis very true," said I, replying to a cast upwards with his eyes, with which he had concluded his address; "Tis very true; and heaven be their resource who have no other but the charity of the world, the stock of which, I fear, is no way sufficient for the many great claims which are hourly made upon it." As I pronounced the words *great claims*, he gave a slight glance with his eye downward upon the sleeve of his tunic.

The images suggested most readily by words being motor images, the sense of ourselves participating in the scene described is promoted by suggestions of gesture and other physical movement. We feel ourselves clutching the side of the canoe, or tiptoeing down the aisle, or leaping the fence, or bowing, or lifting a hand for silence. Such details are in plays actually represented; in stories the suggestion of them induces us in imagination to act out the scene. This fundamental suggestive value is enhanced by the fact that gesture and speech are expressive of what usually interests us in people — mood, emotion, character. By such means the apparition of Strafford to Charles I impresses not only ghostly terror, but also tragic remorse.

(Inglesant, the Esquire in waiting) was on the point of falling asleep when he was startled by the ringing sound of arms and the challenge of the yeoman of the guard on the landing outside the door. The next instant a voice, calm and haughty, which sent a tremor through every nerve, gave back the word, "Christ." Inglesant started up and grasped the back of his chair in terror.

Gracious Heaven! who was this that knew the word? In another moment the hangings across the door were drawn sharply back; and with a quick step, as one who went straight to where he was expected and had a right to be, the intruder entered the ante-chamber. It wore the form and appearance of Strafford — it was Strafford — in dress, and mien, and step. Taking no heed of Inglesant crouched back in terror against the carved chimney-piece, the apparition crossed the room with a quick step, drew the hangings that screened the door of the privy chamber, and disappeared. Inglesant recovered in a moment, sprang across the room, and followed the figure through the door. He saw nothing; but the two gentlemen raised themselves from their couches, startled by his sudden appearance and white, scared look, and said, "What is it, Mr. Esquire?" Before Inglesant, who stood with eyes and mouth open, the picture of terror, could recover himself, the curtain of the bedchamber was drawn hastily back, and the Lord Abergavenny suddenly appeared, saying in a hurried, startled voice, "Send for Mayern! send for Dr. Mayern! The King is taken very ill!" . . .

Inglesant was sent for, and found the King and Abergavenny alone. He declined to speak before the latter until the King positively commanded him to do so. Deadly pale, with his eyes on the ground, and speaking with the greatest difficulty, he then told his story — of the deep silence, his restlessness, the sentry's challenge, and the apparition that appeared. Here he stopped. "And this figure," said Abergavenny in a startled whisper, "did you know who it was?" "Yes, I knew him," said the young man; "would to God I had not." "Who was it?" Paler, if possible, than before, and with a violent effort, Inglesant forced himself to look at the King. A contortion of pain, short but terrible to see, passed over the King's face, but he rose from the chair . . . and, with that commanding dignity which none ever assumed better than he, said — "Who was it, Mr. Esquire?" "My Lord Strafford." Abergavenny stepped back several paces and covered his face with his hands. No one spoke. Inglesant dared not stir, but remained opposite to the King, trembling in every limb, and his eyes on the ground like a culprit. The King continued to stand with his commanding air, but stiff and rigid as a statue; it seemed

as though he had strength to command his outward demeanour, but no power besides. The silence grew terrible. At last the King was able to make a slight motion with his hand. Inglesant seized the opportunity and, bowing to the ground, retired backward to the door.

— J. HENRY SHORTHOUSE, *John Inglesant*, Chapter vi.

Such dialogue includes not only the impression of the person described upon the imagination of the writer, but also his impression upon the other persons in the scene. It is thus doubly suggestive, both directly and indirectly, as may be seen in the opening stanzas of *The Ancient Mariner*; for it approaches through suggestion that interaction which we see on the stage. And the suggestive force of gesture and manner alone, without speech, has its classic exemplification in Dante.

One day, for pastime, we read of Lancelot, how love constrained him. We were alone, and without all suspicion. Several times that reading urged our eyes to meet, and changed the colour of our faces. But one moment alone it was that overcame us. When we read how the fond smile was kissed by such a lover, he, who shall never be divided from me, kissed my mouth all trembling. The book, and he who wrote it, was a Galeotto. That day we read in it no farther. — *Inferno*, v. 127–138, John Carlyle's translation.

II. INTERPRETATION

By such concrete suggestions persons in stories are characterized; that is, they are not only visualized, but interpreted. The suggestive images that we get of them are made to coincide, gradually to confirm an idea. Distinctness, individuality, harmony of impression, are secured by suppressing those actions and gestures in which we are all much alike, and by selecting and stressing those that are significant. The extreme of this method is caricature, as in

Dickens's Uriah Heep; for caricature is only the loading of one side of the balance between what is common and what is peculiar; it is merely exaggeration of a method fundamentally necessary. By this necessity we subordinate, in describing a city square, those aspects in which all city squares are much alike, in order to bring out the local color, those characteristic aspects in which San Francisco differs from Pittsburgh, or New Orleans from Chicago. This obvious method of imaginative composition is fundamental in art. Art is at once what Aristotle calls imitation and at the same time interpretation. Artistic interpretation is selection for significance.

We must select. To record all the sensations of a given experience is impossible. Even if by some extension of photography and phonography we could approach completeness of record, the result would not be what we seek from art. The idea that art imitates life in the sense of reproducing it is as mistaken as it is narrow. Art does, indeed, give us the illusion of life; in that sense it is imitative; but life thus seen and heard is clearer and more vivid than actuality. Actuality is confusing; art is illuminating. Art is a simplification of life. Its representation or suggestion is not so much to recall to us what we have seen or heard as to reveal what that signifies emotionally and thus stimulate us to see and hear more. What art imitates is not the facts of life, but our experience of them; what it seeks to convey is not merely illusion, but vision. Beauty, says Fromentin,¹ springs from nature; it is conceived and revealed by art. "In art² there is hardly any other reality, so far as I know, than this truth of selection."

Thus selection is inevitable for both writer and reader. For the writer, selection springs from singleness of intention.

¹ Eugène Fromentin, *Une année dans le Sahel*, page 214.

² *Idem*, page 149.

He desires us to see what he sees in order to see in it what he sees in it. His insight, his interpretation, is not, indeed, formulated for us in a moral, not summed up in the abstract; he leaves us to do that for ourselves; but it none the less guides his selection. In the first place, it guides his choice of subject. He chooses an anxious crowd, or an old whaler at the wharf, or a boy selling papers, or a public funeral, not merely because he has seen it, but because it has appealed to him, because he has felt something in it. The feeling, in turn, is communicated to us by controlling his choice of details. Another writer, feeling differently, inevitably chooses other details. Both writers are true if they are sincere, if the suggestions of each are faithful to his impressions. Neither can be true in the sense of being exhaustive, of suggesting all aspects, nor in the sense of merely recording, of suggesting no aspect at all. Truth in art is truth to impression; falsehood consists in warping the details to suggest what one does not feel. Whether honest or dishonest, imaginative composition inevitably selects in order to interpret.

And this is what we wish as readers. We desire of stories, poems, or drama, as of painting, music, architecture, not imitation in the sense of reproduction, not mere repetition of the sounds and colors and forms of actual life, but imitation in the sense of directed experience. We wish to feel as if we were experiencing life more deeply by penetrating to what it means. The function of art is to make us live more intensely by living in imagination. Art stimulates by focusing attention. So painting heightens the impressions of the eye, and music those of the ear. In both the composer selects what will reveal. So the suggestiveness of imaginative composition in words is not mere illusion, but message; and the illusion, far from being dispelled, is heightened by the composer's way of detaching his story

from the knot of stories in which actuality has tangled it, so that we can follow it without interruption. A story differs from real life somewhat as a single telephone message differs from a Babel of crossed wires. We read it, as we look at a picture, in order to feel life more truly by feeling it more singly and intensely. Interpretation means the direction of sensations by imagination toward truer emotion.

Practically, interpretation means selecting and filling eloquent moments, taking a situation at its crisis. The realization of crises is fundamental in poetic. In smallest scope and greatest intensity we feel it in lyrics.

MEETING AT NIGHT

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed in the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!¹

Even the popular appeal of ballads often focuses on what in more conscious art is called a situation. Most intense of all story-forms, the modern "short story" frames a single crisis, as does a one-act play. A play of several acts moves from crisis to crisis and commonly turns midway upon a main crisis, *the turning-point*. That the values of a novel are extensive rather than intensive appears in that crises

¹ Browning, *Dramatic Lyrics*.

are less vital to its composition. Its movement may be rather a steady accumulation of experience, as in the novels of Jane Austen. Nevertheless a novel also may be composed dramatically by crises; and even when it is not thus planned as a whole, it must at least be so developed in some parts, or it will lack salience. Thus the writing of crises, the habit of realizing situations, is fundamental in imaginative composition. Besides stimulating observation and enhancing appreciation of literature, it opens to amateurs a certain degree of actual achievement, and sometimes indicates whether that achievement can extend to composition more sustained. In any case, it is worth while for itself as poetic experience. For it teaches that unity in the composition of images, as in the composition of ideas, limits the scope in order to bring out fully, that significance and full realization go hand in hand.

III. MOVEMENT

1. Avoidance of Interruption

As in composition of ideas, coherence of the whole thus depends on unity, on the distinctness of each part; but otherwise a succession of imaginative suggestions has little resemblance to a succession of ideas. Rather we seek movement, such an ordering of suggestions as lets the imagination reach ahead. In order to keep the illusion, to make a story seem rather an experience than a record, the first necessity is to dispense with interruptive explanations. Explanation breaks the spell. The best stories are so arranged as to include all necessary information among the suggestions that conjure up in our minds the action and the actors, so that we seem to discover it as we go along. Movement is thus a succession of significances uninterrupted by the insignificances and irrelevancies which in real life throw

us out. Life is incoherent; art is coherent. The coherence of imaginative composition in words consists in arranging an uninterrupted movement of significances.

Having repeatedly heard of the extreme austerities to which the Cenobite monks at the abbey of *La Trappe*, on the confines of Normandy, submit themselves, I felt a most ardent desire to pay them a visit, and therefore set out for that purpose, and have been highly recompensed for my trouble.

As I approached the abbey, everything served to inspire me with religious terror. The hills, woods, lakes, and rivulets which surrounded the valley seemed placed on purpose to sequester those solitary monks from all commerce with the rest of mankind. The very silence seemed awful, a silence which has reigned uninterrupted for several centuries. The old Gothic buildings appeared more gloomy and solemn than I can express by words. The hollow sound caused by my horse's feet as I entered the gate of the convent made it appear a ruin long deserted by men.

I saw no person in the yard of the convent; and all appeared a silent, dreary ruin. On observing a cord hanging by an old Gothic door, I supposed it to be that of the bell, and therefore began to pull it pretty hard, and at length made the bell to toll, the flat and solemn sound of which, echoed through the long, damp cloisters, equalled the universal sadness of the place. After I had waited for some time, I perceived the door to open, and observed a tall, pale, meager figure approach, hideous as a specter. His head was entirely shaved, except a narrow circle of hair left like a band all round. He wore a robe such as the monks commonly wear, of very coarse, white cloth, which reached down to the great wooden shoes he had upon his feet. With his eyes fixed upon the earth, and his hands joined together before his breast, he advanced slowly towards me and, bowing down his head to the earth, put his lips to my shoes. — JAMES ST. JOHN, *Letters from France to a Gentleman in the South of Ireland* (Dublin, 1788), Letter xl (Paris, August 20).

The slowness and vagueness of this description are due primarily to its abstract, general introduction. *Religious*

terror is no more vivid than it is precise. *Hills, woods, lakes, and rivulets* are enumerated without evincing or arousing the slightest attention. They would serve equally ill for China, Germany, or Indiana. Since definite suggestion begins with *hollow sound*, the preceding sentences should be reduced by about three fourths. The vital fourth, then expressed concretely, would be, not just as good, but vastly better. The first lesson of movement is to begin promptly. But the concrete details — *hollow sound caused by my horse's feet — toll . . . flat and solemn sound — tall, pale, meager — shaved except a narrow circle — coarse white cloth, etc.* — which convey practically all the imaginative suggestion, are not merely given late; they are also given very slowly, interrupted by many words merely explanatory and sometimes quite unnecessary. Thus the feebleness of this passage is due to its clogged and clumsy movement. Conversely the last sentence, which is obviously the most suggestive, has the least interruption. It is not merely the most distinct in imagery, but also the least cumbered. The rest of the passage, even after the vague introduction, is full of expressions superfluous even as explanation and quite meaningless as description: *I entered — made it appear — by men — I saw — all appeared — On observation . . . made the — I had waited — I perceived — he had upon his feet.* This tiresome diffuseness, which comes from relying on sentiment and information instead of suggestion, consists in delayed movement. All that is expressed here, all that touches the imagination, can be said in half the time; and, so said, it would be enhanced. Revision for movement means freeing the start from unnecessary ceremony and the course from delayed predicates.

2. Descriptive Predicates

Practical grasp of movement begins with predicates. The more the predicate contributes to the descriptive effect, the likelier the description is to be lively in both imagery and movement. Probably the most directly suggestive sentences are those with strong single predicates. In this means of force descriptions otherwise quite different are commonly found to be alike.

And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost.

— *Genesis*, xlix. 33.

As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings. — *Deuteronomy*, xxxii. 11.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free.

— COLERIDGE, *The Ancient Mariner*, xxv.

Thus the predicate, instead of clogging the description, should at least assist it. Descriptive predicates also, by accomplishing what must else be sought through accumulation of nouns and adjectives, relieve the sentence movement. These advantages may be summed up in the word directness. We should try to make our expression answer our impression, and in turn impress a reader, as directly as possible. Otherwise the impression may be dulled by the very length of transmission. Imaginative composition in words accomplishes very little by mere accumulation.

I may tell you his eyes are pale blue, his features regular, his hair silky, brownish, his legs long, his head rather stooping (only the head), his mouth commonly closed; these are the facts, and you have seen much the same in a nursery doll. Such literary craft is

of the nursery. So with landscapes. The art of the pen (we write on darkness) is to rouse the inward vision, instead of labouring with a drop-scene brush, as if it were to the eye; because our flying minds cannot contain a protracted description. That is why the poets, who spring imagination with a word or a phrase, paint lasting pictures. The Shakespearian, the Dantesque, are in a line, two at most.

— GEORGE MEREDITH, *Diana of the Crossways*, Chapter xv.

One of the grossest literary errors of our time has been to confuse the enumeration of parts with "painting," to believe that the interminable juxtaposition of details, even picturesque details, can in the end achieve a single image, make us sensible of the vast spectacles of the physical universe. — JULES LEMAÎTRE, *Impressions de théâtre*, 8^{me} série (the review of a dramatization of Zola's *Une Page d'amour*).

The psychology of description is pursued by Lemaître further in a later study.

We are passing a tree where a bird is singing. . . . "The bird utters from the foliage his joyous song." That sentence is not vivid. Why? Because it expresses not the first moment of the perception, but the last. First the perception is analyzed, sight separated and distinguished from hearing, the foliage put here and the song there, though in reality both were perceived at once. But that is not all. After having analyzed his personal perception, the writer tries to express mainly the feeling of pleasure that it produces. So he writes "joyous song." That is why the sentence is not vivid. It is not description, but analysis; and it conveys, not the objects directly, but the feelings that they arouse in us. . . . Now the vivid style, at its height and in most cases, seems to me to consist essentially in seizing and fixing the sensation at the moment when it arises, before it is analyzed into a sentiment.

— J. LEMAÎTRE, *Les contemporains*, 1^{re} série, page 168; quoted by A. ALBALAT, *La formation du style*, page 171.

In the case of the bird in the tree Lemaître bids us say, with the strongest modern writers, "The foliage sings."

This particular expression may give us pause as being violent, as forgetting that language is used not only for imagination, but also for information. But Lemaître for the moment is waiving the latter use; nor is he insisting on a certain form of words. His point is that for vividness descriptive expression should be pared down to the quick, freed as far as possible from indirectness. How far this habit should be carried in a given case must depend partly on usage, partly on individual taste; but the principle is fundamentally sound.

Besides being generally suggestive, this idea of direct expression is particularly applicable to the revision of sentence-form. Since the aim of descriptive sentences is a succession of images, they can hardly be revised, as the sentences of discussion are, according to the relations of ideas (page 58). They follow, not a sequence of thought, but a series of sensations. The principle of logical subordination, therefore, does not apply.

The valley swam under him. He closed his eyes for a second; but his hand still gripped the projecting edge. A thin voice called far above. A rope brushed his face. It swung out and back. With a sickening effort he freed one hand, clutched it, clutched it again with the other, swung loose in the void. His legs writhed about it of their own accord. It held. His whole body trusted it and sank on it. He was saved.

Suppose these statements subordinated as ideas: —

As the valley seemed to swim under him, though his eyes closed for a second, his hands still gripped, etc.

This is smoother, indeed; but it is flat, even absurd. For the object is to express, not ideas in logical relations, but the sensations themselves as they came. Thus the following simple coordination is truer to the impression than subordination could be.

I took the glass; and the shores leaped nearer, and I saw the tangle of the woods and the breach of the surf; and the brown roofs and the black insides of houses peeped among the trees.

— STEVENSON, *The Beach of Falesá*, Chapter i.

The movement from clause to clause, sentence to sentence, should seek to make the reader follow, not logically, but imaginatively. To this end, the primary means is direct predication. "The foliage sings" as a descriptive principle is applicable only in general and with modifications. It expresses an ideal. But as a formula for descriptive sentences it is thoroughly practical.

As I looked out of my window at the driving snowstorm, I saw a hat whirling down the street.

This is obviously clogged (page 181) by superfluous explanation. *As I looked out of the window* and *I saw* add nothing to either the image or the sense. But, as in many such cases, the redundancy arises from the indirectness of the whole sentence-form. Revision should see first of all whether the main sensation cannot better be thrown into the predicate than left hovering among nouns and adjectives. To say *The driving snow whirled a hat down the street*, or *A hat whirled with the snow down the street*, is truer to the impression, since it follows the sensations. And often we may be content with either *drove* or *whirled*, using whichever better expresses the single action.

Several crows *are walking about* a newly sowed wheat field, *and we pause to note* their graceful movements and glossy coats. *I have seen no bird walk the ground* with just the same air *the crow does*. It is not exactly pride; there is no strut or swagger in it, though, perhaps, just a little condescension; it is the contented, complaisant, and self-possessed gait of a lord over his domains. . . . The hawk looks awkward and out of place on the ground; the game birds hurry and skulk; but the crow is at home.¹

¹ John Burroughs, *An Idyll of the Honey-Bee*.

Compare the swift suggestion of *hurry and skulk* with the cumbrous slowness of the two opening sentences.

She passed down the aisle with a swaying movement as if dizzy.

Here the single image intended is expressed by *passed*, *swaying*, *movement*, and *dizzy*, four words. Of these, *passed* and *movement*, since they add nothing to the image, are superfluous. The best way to do without them is to convey the impression directly by the predicate, to say, instead of *she passed with a swaying movement*, simply *she swayed*. The direct predication *She swayed dizzily down the aisle* is more sharply descriptive; and in many such cases the adverb adds little to the right verb; *dizzily* may be sufficiently suggested by *swayed*. So such a sentence as

With a clatter a milk wagon hastened noisily down the street.
is typically straightened to

A milk wagon clattered down the street.

Such revisions are neither for correctness nor for logical conciseness. The indirect form is quite correct; and conciseness is not necessarily a merit in description. The particular revisions above do not insist on particular words. Other words might be as good, or better. The point is simply to free the movement. The primary essential of free movement is direct predication.

3. Rhythm

Direct predication being assured, the whole passage should be read aloud to see whether the course of the sentences keeps pace with the action. If the action was rapid, the sentences should be short; i.e., it is better to go on predicating than to subordinate by modifying phrases or clauses. If the action was also hurried or confused, the sentences may be left disconnected; if it was measured, they

may be connected and even balanced; if it was slow and lingering, disconnectedness disturbs by breaking the pace. In a word, revision of description is partly revision for sound.

We feel this most distinctly in verse. The effect of lightness, gaiety, and rapidity in Browning's *Pied Piper*, of measured and solemn slowness in Gray's *Elegy*, or of a marching, singing throng in Tennyson's "Clang battle-axe, and clash brand! Let the King reign!" is produced not only by the choice of single words appropriate to the emotion, but also by appropriate verse movement. The descriptive suggestiveness of sentence movement in prose may be felt by comparing in this aspect the following passages. The first carries tranquilly with measured cadence to a striking close. The abruptness of the second enhances the impression of agitation. The third, on the contrary, dulls and belies the agitation of the scene by its balanced oratorical cadences.

From Nantes he descended imperceptibly along tall hedge-rows of acacia, till on a sudden, with a novel freshness in the air, through a low archway of laden fruit-trees it was visible — sand, sea, and sky, in three quiet spaces, line upon line.

—PATER, *Gaston de Latour*, page 102.

"I have been ill, Mackellar," he said again. "Something broke, Mackellar — or was going to break, and then all swam away. I think I was very angry. Never you mind, Mackellar; never you mind, my man. I wouldna hurt a hair upon your head. Too much has come and gone." — STEVENSON, *The Master of Ballantrae*, page 183 (Edinburgh Edition).

At the moment that their attendants were placing two wreaths of their favourite jasmines on their brows, the Caliph, who had just heard the tragical catastrophe, arrived. He looked not less pale and haggard than the Goules that wander at night among graves. Forgetful of himself and every one else, he broke through

the midst of the slaves, fell prostrate at the foot of the sofa, beat his bosom, called himself "atrocious murderer!" and invoked upon his head a thousand imprecations. — BECKFORD, *Vathek*.

Furthermore, adaption of movement to mood or emotion is sufficient assurance of what we all demand of sentence movement — variety.

Direct predication and that larger revision which seeks to make the course of the sentences keep pace with the action or suggest the emotion have the further advantage of moving in sure channels. They tend away from misguided and labored competition with painting by following the natural movement, which is narrative. Narrative movement best conveys those sensations on which description must always rely mainly, the sensations of sound and motion. Light, color, odor, touch, may all be suggested, and, less specifically, shape, mass, and outline. But suggestions in these fields cannot long be accumulated without fatigue and confusion. Most often they must be suggested rapidly; and the main reliance of description, that which carries it along most readily, is suggestion of sound and motion. Lessing¹ reminded us long ago that Homer describes a ship, not by trying to paint its picture, but by narrating how men launched it or beached it; and in the contemporary art of the newspaper every description is a "story." Between these extremes and in every variety of detail, description moves most successfully by narrative.

4. Interaction

So even brief descriptions, without attempt at story in the large sense, are made lively and easy by narrative interaction and even by dialogue. A crowd is described, not by enumerating its persons or classes, but by telling

¹ Lessing, *Laokoön*, translation by E. Frothingham, Boston, 1874.

what they did and said to one another: how a tall woman, smiling, lifted to her shoulder a child smothered below; what the street boy replied to the old gentleman after squeezing past him; what gestures and words marked the easing of the press as the cashier found himself beside the lineman. Thus the necessary information is woven in. The transitions, being themselves concrete, do not break the illusion, and do not interrupt the movement. The following student themes, though the object in each case is purely descriptive, i.e., simply to realize the scene, are all made freer and more direct than those quoted above on pages 180 and 181 by narrative movement.

"All those who wish may leave before the after-meeting starts." The speaker's voice came softly from the distant platform. There was a deathly silence. Then came a slight rustle as heads were craned to see if any one dared leave. I swept my eyes over and then up around the long line of galleries. They were packed. All the eyes were riveted on the platform. The central figure was motionless. He leaned slightly forward and held up his hand. "Hush! Now think." The quiet voice tuned up the suppressed emotion. A woman near me hastily drew her handkerchief. Her half-stifled sob made the white faces next her twitch. A lump rose in my throat. I fought it down. Again I suffered myself to look at the people in front of me. The contorted features of a man's half-turned face burned into my mind. I shut out the sight. Still something in me stretched out to those in the whole of the vast auditorium. Their presence vibrated within me. It oppressed, it stifled me. Some one sobbed aloud. It broke the stillness. It started me. Blindly I plunged for the door.

This is not strong in phrase. Its force is due almost entirely to its directness, as may be seen better by recasting the first part in the conventional manner.

It was a crowded meeting at the close of a "revival." Even the galleries of the great auditorium were full. Though the building

was so large that the platform seemed remote, the silence was such that the leader's voice was clearly audible. At the end of the regular meeting he gave opportunity for any who so wished to leave before the opening of the after-meeting; but no one stirred. The audience seemed to be hypnotized. . . .

The weaving of the information and the setting into the action makes easier reading; but the method may be still better characterized by saying that it follows the sensations. Similarly, though in quite various scenes, these others follow the counsel of Lemaitre.

Sweethearts smiled with their eyes and tried to belie the drooping corners of their mouths. Mothers wept openly and dried wind-roughened cheeks with aprons embroidered like cloth of gold. Hale old fathers strutted back and forth on the platform in fustanellas like white kilts, so bizarre that they seemed to exhibit the tell-tale basting of a costumer. They blew cigarette smoke noisily through their bushy beards, or took snuff in an aggressive fashion. The tight-trouser'd youths were off for America. One was bending over a sobbing little boy who pressed his puffy red face against his big brother's leg. Comforting seemed all he needed; for, a second after the Argonaut had dropped a broad penny into the tiny palm, the transformed child was clattering up the blazing road toward Megalopolis. Not even a good-bye. He was no sooner over the hill and under the dusty plane tree than some one cried, "It's coming." The youths in the German clothes hurled their oil-cloth cases into the high-stepped cars; the sweethearts wept; the mothers sobbed, and the fathers smoked furiously. The train jerked spasmodically into motion, and the sweethearts ran beside it for a few rods. It disappeared around a great limestone cliff, alive with red new handkerchiefs. Just too late to see the last coach, little brother Demetrios panted up. He had cast aside his clicking shoes. In one grimy palm was a piece of sugary loukoumi. It was to have been a farewell tribute.

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While we waited for the train I tried to discover some way of preventing the rain from getting inside my coat-collar and down under the lap-robe to the seat. The horses, hardly visible through the inky blackness, even with the muddy lantern under the open buckboard, alternately pawed the ground and shivered. My hands, long since stripped of gloves, were becoming cold and clammy. The stiffening wet rains cut into the skin; and all the while the night dripped. "Better walk the horses around." We oozed and bumped along past the row of country stores, the mud dropping in cakes from the rising spoke ends. A gust of wind hurled a bucket of water at my face and slapped the lantern out. Then I heard the train whistle. I felt that I was in the road, though it was invisible, when we struck the incline leading down to the station. The reins slipped out through my hands. As the wheels grazed the platform, the locomotive headlight appeared through the mist.

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Into the delivery room of the big store, where flippant youths and listless girls trot incessantly from dusty chute to dusty pigeon-hole, and drooping clerks keep an eye on the clock in that longest hour between five and six, came a burst of sunshine — that is, the baby. She was in the arms of her smiling young mother, who easily threaded her way through the maze of hampers. "Well, if it isn't Mame!" "You're looking fine. How old is the baby, Mame?" "Four teeth, you said? Bless 'er little heart!" "Look at the dimple, would you?" "Say, Kate, she's smilin' at you." "What makes her cheeks so red? and will her hair always be curly?" "Let me hold her; you've had her long enough." Mrs. Mame beamed upon her rosy darling, most precious of packages, being handed about from one to the other, and visibly curled up her nose at the familiar room. "Just the same as ever, you see, Mame. Is it only two years since you left?" "Less than that to me," smiled the visitor. "Have you all hugged baby now? Come, Pet; we must get home to Papa." The dimpled, gurgling mite was returned in safety, clutching the mammoth dahlia from Kate's tumbler. "So long! Do come again," chanted the black-robed chorus as their idol was borne away waving "bye-bye to the ladies" with the

nodding red dahlia. Even that spot of sunshine vanished. The tumbler was empty and the desk quite plainly dusty. The hampers resumed their creaking, the pens their scratching. "Ain't she the lucky one?" sighed Kate.

Even landscape, which cannot often be suggested extensively by words, need not be catalogued. The following of sensations and the throwing of some description into the predicates give directness even when there is no stir of action.

The sun was sinking below the line of locust trees along the road; and its rays shot through the openings of the leaves to redden the branches of the old maple. The sky was blue, with a few white islands stationed upon its expanse; and the edge of the hill looked like the edge of the world. There was no wind; and the falling leaves dipped leisurely back and forth as they floated to the brown sward below. A vesper sparrow perched on the barbed-wire fence that divided the earth from the universe and trilled a song service to the departing day.

These themes have no exceptional merit. In fact, they are chosen deliberately instead of professional work because they show what most college amateurs can achieve in imaginative realization when they work in right directions. How much farther these principles apply in the larger movement of sustained narrative will appear in the following chapter. Meantime it is clear that the fundamentals of imaginative composition in words are, in the order of experience: first and above all, to realize sensations; secondly, to direct them by and to a dominant impression; thirdly, by imitating the movement of life to make the reader follow them: first, to observe; second, to choose and make eloquent single moments; third, to follow: first, imagination; second, interpretation; third, movement.

CHAPTER V

NARRATIVE MOVEMENT

SUSTAINED imaginative composition in words has two main directions, story and drama. Both go back to the beginnings of civilization; and story-telling especially, while it has developed various forms among various peoples and in successive centuries, has accumulated a large common fund of experience. Thus the history of story-telling is worth much for practical guidance.

I. TYPICAL NARRATIVE FORMS

Throughout the earlier centuries of any civilization story-telling has been oral. When we find an old story meager, we must remember that the written form in which it is preserved may be merely a summary or skeleton. The abundance of concrete suggestion on which modern times rely for imaginative realization (pages 164-175) was anciently supplied by dramatic recital, by the voice, the gesture, and even the amplification of the narrator, and sometimes by dramatic dance or refrain of the audience. Much of this survives even to-day in oral story-telling to children. How much of it was eventually carried over into manuscript depended partly on the writer's literary bent, partly on the literary occasion or the literary habit of the time. Sometimes the suggestions are mere hints. Sometimes, as in the Norse sagas or in the *Book of Esther*, though few, they are vivid.

Eyjolf saw that the attack was beginning to flag, and grew afraid that the countryside might be raised upon them; so they brought up the fire. John of Bakki had a tar-pin with him. They took the sheepskins from the frames that stood outside there, and tarred them and set them on fire. Some took hay and stuffed it into the windows and put fire to it; and soon there was a great smoke in the house and a choking heat. Gizur lay down in the hall by one of the pillars and kept his nose on the floor. Groa his wife was near him. Thorbjorn Neb was lying there too, and he and Gizur had their heads close together. Thorbjorn could hear Gizur praying to God in many ways and fervently, and thought he had never before heard praying like it. As for himself, he could not have opened his mouth for the smoke. — *Sturlungasaga*, as translated by W. P. KER in *Epic and Romance*, page 298.

The king made a feast . . . in the court of the garden of the king's palace, where were white, green, and blue hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble. The beds were of gold and silver upon a pavement of red and blue and white and black marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold. — *Esther*, i. 5-7.

When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and bitter cry. — *Ibid.* iv. 1.

As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. — *Ibid.* vii. 8.

Sometimes, as in the great narratives of Homer, they are so abundant as to be a model for all times to come.

1. Tale

A tale is a narrative summary. Often imaginative in the sense of being avowedly fictitious, it is rarely imaginative in the sense of suggesting by concrete detail. Whatever may have been supplied in its oral rendering, in its written form it characteristically omits detail, relying for its effect on

conciseness. Thus its movement is simple chronological succession without salient stages of action; and its chief merit is straightforward lucidity. Narrative conciseness and lucidity are worth learning, as is witnessed by the universal prescription of tales as elementary exercises in the classical rhetoric; but they are virtues rather of rhetoric than of poetic; they do not much exercise imagination. The difference may be seen by comparing the traditional summary form of an ancient beast-fable with the development given to the same fable by Joel Chandler Harris in his *Nights with Uncle Remus*. Harris's rendering of these typical ancient tales imitates the old oral rendering by abundantly suggesting sound, motion, action, speech, and even character; but in so doing, as well as by composing for salience, he carries them beyond the limits of what we generally understand by a tale. Dialogue in a tale is used, not for the full dramatic suggestion seen in *Uncle Remus*, but barely and for narrative conciseness. Within these limits the art of the tale is carried to its height by La Fontaine; and even he stretches the limits by enhancing the dialogue artistically with marvelously concise suggestions of gesture and manner. Typically a tale has no such development. It is a story in the germ, undeveloped, leaving all imagination to the reader.

This perennial form of narrative, through many changes of literary fashion, now in verse, now in prose, shows two main kinds, the one visionary, the other practical: tales of hope or fear and tales of shrewdness or devotion, tales of wonder and anecdotes or fables, fairy tales and moral tales. Fairy tales come to us from folk-lore. They are tales of dreams aroused in man by nature. Whether of hope or of fear, they tell of what must lie beyond this visible world, of mates fair beyond womankind, of unearthly wealth, of the revengeful or grateful dead, of witches half-human and gods or demons superhuman. In various ways they tell us

that life is not merely a struggle, but an adventure. What man does not find, but still desires, in this world they project into an otherworld and invite us to break through. This earliest and simplest form of creative idealism has changed its details and its language from century to century; but in essence it abides because it reflects a motive fundamentally human.

The converse human motive is to deal with the world as it has been found by experience. Therefore from times no less ancient come down tales of worldly or divine wisdom, moral tales. In their conversational form, anecdote, they have often been pointed by humor and typically close on a witty retort. For the illustration of oratory they have sometimes been more sustained and more suggestive. Under the title *exempla* they fill medieval compends intended for the illustration of sermons. Among the most sustained and suggestive of *exempla* in western Europe are legends of the saints, especially those of the Virgin. As the wisdom inculcated by the *conte dévot* is higher than worldly prudence, so the movement is sometimes larger, and rises now and then to striking narrative beauty, as in *The Tumbler of Our Lady* and some of the traditions of St. Francis. But typically the movement of even the longer saints' legends is restricted. The tale is a story in a nutshell; and its classic examples are those ancient beast-fables which go by the name of Aesop and were recreated in literature by La Fontaine. Teaching a very limited and practical morality, they teach also the limited and practical narrative virtues of conciseness and point.

2 Epic and Romance

The complementary human impulses to realism and to idealism, satisfied most simply by tales, are plain in the earliest forms of more extended narrative, epic and romance.

The tale is perennial. The source alike of epic and of romance, it survives these and later forms and seems likely to endure as long as men live in the world. Epic, on the other hand, emerges in definite form at a later stage of culture, romance later still; and each, having carried to high development its original narrative tendency, has faded into later narrative forms.

a. EPIC

The Homeric poems as we have them date from a firmly, though simply, organized Greek statehood; the Greek romances, centuries later, from its decadence. In western Europe, epic dates from the earlier period of feudal monarchy, and romance from its prime. In France, the literary leader of the middle age, the epic *Chanson de Roland* was followed almost immediately by the development of romance. In the Scandinavian north, the epic period was longer, the epic sagas of Old Norse outlasting the romantic prime of the Latin countries. In England, the epic *Beowulf* long antedates the French *Roland*; and no considerable development of romance appears before the French invasion. What concerns us in these typical cases is not the historical sequence for itself, but the ways in which first the one and then the other fundamental narrative motive worked out extensively.

Epic as it appears in literature is obviously composed by single poets; but no less obviously it is composed from anonymous earlier traditional verse tales of heroes, such as the tale of the Trojan horse, or the tale of dragon-slaying by Siegfried or Beowulf. The English *Beowulf* gives hints, and the *Odyssey* fuller indications, of how the minstrel adapted and combined¹ earlier verse tales into extended

¹ See C. S. Baldwin, *Introduction to English Medieval Literature*, pages 16-18.

narrative. There we can discern the epic process midway. Behind the local minstrel is an indefinite accumulation of traditional hero tales; after him comes in time *the* minstrel, the greater spokesman-poet seen at his best in Homer, whose art is sufficient to make the traditional accumulation permanent in form and national in significance. Thus in all its stages epic is communal; it is essentially the story of *our* heroes; and its practical lesson for story-writing is the constant popularity of fiction that images the greater historical figures of our common faith. Among the most popular stories of any age or race are those whose persons embody communal aspirations.

Epic is practically instructive also in that its great persons are imaginatively realized as individuals, and their golden age in its physical details. This imaginative recreation of the past, sometimes significant as history, is always significant as poetry. We are able to enter imaginatively into the heroic life because it is suggested to us vividly by concrete abundance. Even the somewhat stunted Germanic epics summon up the past in this way.

Then was time and hour
that to hall should go Healfdene's son;
himself the king would sit at meat.
Never heard I that a greater host of people
around their prize-giver proudly gathered.
Bent them to benches blithe followers,
fain of the feasting. Fairly uplifted
beakers of beer their brothers mighty,
drank hail to them deep in the hall,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot within was
filled with friends. Any foulness then
the Scylding people scorned to perpetrate.
Then the son of Healfdene handed to Beowulf
a golden standard, guerdon of his victory,

hand-wrought hilted banner, helm and byrnie.
From the hoard a huge sword beheld full many
before him borne at bidding. — *Beowulf*, 1008-1024.

In this aspect of epic Homer is a model. Not only is he constantly concrete in presenting the setting of heroic life, the launching of ships, the details of fighting, feasting, and worship; but he gives such salience to his crises as to impress their full significance of mood, emotion, and character. Among the great scenes of fiction will always stand out Helen at the Scaean Gate, Hector parting from Andromache, ship-wrecked Odysseus taken by Nausicaa to her father's hall, or daunting the insolent suitors.

In such scenes epic reaches the height of its composition. From scene to scene there is little narrative movement. Though the latter part of the *Odyssey* has some cumulative effect, even Homer does not generally gather momentum nor work for any total impression. Much less are unity and sustained movement attempted in other early epics. Primitive epic, in contrast with the artistic epic of Vergil or Milton, is a chronological accumulation of episodes, each distinct in itself, but all together constituting a mere series. Of narrative movement it teaches only the detail — and not always even this — of weaving the setting into the action (page 189). Its practical lessons for story-writing are only the two cardinal ones of communal interest and concrete realization.

b. ROMANCE

Neither of these two interests is a mainspring of romance. The romantic development of fairy tales, whether of oriental tradition, or, more popularly in western Europe, of Celtic folk-lore, rather blurs whatever there may have been in the original of locality. The scenes of romance may have names, though often even these are vague and changeable,

but they have no local habitations. These far countries with their forests and castles lack the epic definiteness of Hrothgar's hall or the haunted mere in *Beowulf*, of Homer's halls and sea and shore. The fairyland in which we travel is neither here nor there, but always beyond; and we are left to make up most of the scenery for ourselves. Similarly vague are the persons. One knight or damsel is so like another that romances have been transferred bodily from Gawain to Percival or Lancelot. Persons and places alike are not individual, but typical. The main interest of romance is adventure for itself; and its main motive is generosity. Its generous code is applied in love and in chivalry. Instead of practical consideration, which is freely recognized in epic, romance is animated altogether by risk and devotion. Thus it answers, not what we do and are actually, but what we do and are in our dreams of stronger manhood and fairer womanhood and more adventurous life. It takes us out of ourselves.

The desire to live in imagination as we cannot live in fact has been answered by romance, through many changes of taste as to heroes and adventures, in ways that are so essentially similar that we may regard them as typical. Not only have knights in armor and ladies in long sleeves been revived successfully again and again since the middle age, but contemporary romantic figures, though they wear modern clothes and sally forth on motor cars and aeroplanes instead of horses to far countries of more certain geography, are essentially like the old knights in stirring us by adventure, generous love, and chivalry, are like them also in being less individuals than types. Romantic heroes, heroines, and villains are generally types because romantic interest is less in what they are than in what they do, less in character than in adventure. This interest is answered most simply, often even crudely, by melodrama. But if we sneer at melodrama,

we need to remind ourselves that its fundamental interest is nevertheless permanently human.

Of narrative movement the romances of the middle age have generally no more than has epic. Both are aggregative, or at best cumulative, relying not on any movement of the whole, but on each part separately. Their practical value for the study of story-writing is less of form than of motive. In this aspect epic and romance are complementary. For though romance was generally later in reaching extended development, it is discernible as a motive beside the epic motive of the *Odyssey*; and in its primitive form of fairy tale it is as old and as persistent as the other narrative interest. Now side by side, now yielding the one to the other, these fundamental emotional interests have survived all changes of taste. What men and women have always sought in stories is imaginative realization, on the one hand of themselves and their common achievements, and on the other hand of their dreams.

3. Novel (Extensive Realization)

The term *novel* is so general as to include almost any modern long story. But though the novel is too various to be called a distinct literary form, it is none the less a distinct literary development; for it is a long story composed to be read as a whole and sustaining its narrative movement. Thus the development of the novel, the gradual advance toward sustained narrative movement by modern writers of long stories, is very suggestive practically. The long stories of Defoe are hardly recognizable to our time as novels. Like the French romances of the seventeenth century, they are, so far as form goes, mere aggregations of adventures. Of narrative movement they have nothing. Of character they have very little. Who ever cites their persons? The triumph of Defoe is his extraordinary im-

aginative realization. His scenes are so specifically concrete as to give us the sense of actual experience. A born journalist, he satisfied the popular passion for living imaginatively in unusual scenes. His pamphlets and his longer pieces alike — for they are exactly alike in method — are modern newspaper stories. Which is fact and which fiction his contemporaries were often unable to determine; and even we, for all our research, cannot always make up our minds. They blamed him, and we praise him, for "lying like truth." He achieved an almost perfect verisimilitude; and this was the first practical lesson for the novel from rising journalism.

The stories of Smollett are more readily accepted as novels; for they have a certain degree of narrative movement. Instead of merely adding scene to scene, they make one scene lead on to the next. Smollett's literary model was the picaresque or rogue story, developed in Spain and known best to him, as to us, in such French forms as Le Sage's *Gil Blas*. Its formula is simple. A shifty fellow, whose literary pedigree can be traced back through French, Spanish, and Italian types to Latin comedy, is involved in a scrape. He extricates himself by his wits; but in so doing he involves himself in another. In escaping from this he falls into another; and so on, till he finally triumphs. But though the formula is simple, the effective working out demands more connection between parts than was usually attempted by Defoe, who also dealt with shifty fellows. Thus we have, as an added narrative enjoyment, some sense of looking ahead and moving on. Smollett also spent more pains than Defoe on characterization. His "sad sea-dog," indeed, is only a type; but the Welsh surgeon in *Roderick Random*, developed partly by mannerism and dialect, rises beyond this, as do some others of Smollett's characters, toward individuality.

Characterization had already been carried to a distinctly

higher degree outside of the novel. One of the chief characters of eighteenth-century fiction, Sir Roger de Coverley, is in the periodical essays of the *Spectator*; and, though he is the most eminent, he is far from being the only creation of these papers. Some of the people, to be sure, are frankly put forth as types. The idle woman of fashion, the man about town, and not a few of the others are merely repetitions of traditional "characters" and are developed in the traditional manner, rather by discussion than by narrative. But Sir Roger, though he too is discussed, is also narrated. We see him, for instance, rousing from his nap in church to rebuke other sleepers. There is of course no narrative movement; for what narrative there is conforms to the general essay plan. How much farther such narrative can be carried without forsaking the essay method appeared later in Irving. Meantime the achievement of creative characterization was ready at hand for the narrative use of the right novelist.

The right novelist, the man to appreciate the narrative elements already defined in story-telling and to combine them in large and sustained narrative movement, was Fielding. Richardson, composing his interminable novels in the form of letters written by the characters, had not advanced the art of narrative movement. His stories proceed by the old accumulation. Within this method he had, indeed, advanced the art of characterization beyond the mere depiction of a character to its development. Very slowly, even laboriously, his persons grow before our eyes. His characters may thus be said to move, but hardly his action. His stories are not merely long; they are tedious. The art of movement, of so composing as to hold attention on the scene not only for what it reveals, but for what it promises, of enhancing interest by developing character through progressive action, of making a long story not

merely a series of episodes, but by interaction a series of situations,—all this was reserved for Fielding. Sterne carried to the highest degree the art of interaction in detail, of what may be called dramatic description (page 173). There is no better narrative than his so far as it goes; but it seldom goes beyond a page; sustained narrative he did not even attempt. Fielding, less expert in dramatic description, achieved the larger art of dramatic narrative. He moves through a whole course of complications to a solution of character.

This is a contribution to the novel from the drama. Though Fielding failed as a playwright, he learned from the stage the art of interaction, of making each person reveal both himself and each other person by his actions on them and theirs on him through a series of critical situations. He brings his persons together to act and react. No previous English novels, and few later ones for some years, show such expertness with critical situations as enlivens that Upton inn scene in *Tom Jones* where on the same spot in rapid succession the hero yields to the temptress and is abashed at the unexpected meeting with the heroine, and both are assailed by her irate father. Interesting for itself in characteristic action, this scene is interesting further by making us look forward to the next. To compose novels by such situations has long been usual; but in its time this was a new achievement. It was the final stroke in the development of sustained narrative. In Fielding's hands the English novel reached full growth. Later writers, refining the art and extending its application, have added nothing essential to the technic of the novel. Technically this method of composition accounts also for Fielding's superior characterization. As observation of human life, though admirable, it is merely broader, not finer, than Addison's and hardly more penetrative than Richardson's; but it is superior in

method. It develops character, not by mere instances of this quality and that, as Addison in his essays, not by the slow accumulation of Richardson, but narratively by making each suggestion of speech, gesture, and action contribute to the movement of the whole. In spite of some surviving conventions, such as the introductions to the several stages and the interpolation of anecdote, the novel moves in its main course as a whole, and all its elements of plot, character, and setting move together in harmony. From being a program of related musical pieces the English novel became a symphony.

Further than this the novel need not go in unity. Though some later novels have been harmonized more strictly, and some few have been composed almost as plays, there is in this direction some risk of sacrificing what we all desire in a novel, a sense of the abundance of actual life. So long as the main course of the story is clear and progressive, we are rather pleased than annoyed at meeting many people and adventures by the way. In the hands of its most successful writers the novel has pretty generally remained extensive and inclusive. Thus, as they seem to have felt instinctively, we receive more of the illusion of experience. The only fundamental demand of sustained narrative composition is that it should constantly be narrative and that it should lead us on through unfolding situations to a solution satisfying as the outcome of character.

4. Short Story (Intensive Interpretation)

The desire for fulness in story-telling, satisfied earlier in epics and romances, was satisfied more continuously later in novels. The more fundamental desire for intensity must be answered somewhat by a story of any form whatsoever, since all story-telling is some sort of imaginative intensification. But in the teller's emphasis on this aspect stories

have differed widely. At present the art of intensification has been for fifty years a main preoccupation. The overwhelmingly popular form of narrative is the "short-story." Though the name is unfortunately vague, the form is quite distinct. A "short-story" is the narrative intensification of a crisis. Poe's *Fall of the House of Usher*, Bret Harte's *Outcasts of Poker Flat*, Stevenson's *Sire de Malétoit's Door*, and a score of others rise at once to recollection as typical of this intense realization of a crisis. The antecedents of the crisis are merely hinted; and the skill with which this hinting is made clear, brief, and interesting is a large part of short-story art. The consequences of the crisis are not worked out beyond the immediate issue; i.e., this immediate issue is so vividly told as to be both satisfying and suggestive. A single situation is so isolated and then so filled with suggestion as to constitute a complete story.

Though in this distinct and recognized form the short story is very modern, its method was long latent; for it is the very essence of narrative. Thus in looking back over earlier stories we may not only see how genius shaped narrative art by discerning and developing certain means of intensification, but, more practically, review what those means of intensification are. The primitive and perennial tale, for instance, is not intense. Other narrative merits it may have, but not intensity. Why? Because it is not focused, but diffused. Its conciseness consists in touching several, perhaps many, events briefly and without much emphasis on any one. It is often a story long in the time of its action made short in the time of the telling. Thus equal in narrative length to the short story, or even shorter, it is diametrically opposite in narrative method.

But of the opposite short-story method, of the narrative isolation of a crisis, there must have been very early instances, to judge from echoes in popular ballads. Though

the popular ballads as finally preserved in manuscript are rarely older than the fifteenth century, and some of them are much later, they probably represent an older, in some cases apparently a much older, oral tradition. To this earlier oral habit we may plausibly ascribe a narrative method very common in popular ballads, especially in the best, the devotion of the telling to a single crisis. In *Edward, Babylon*, and *Sir Patrick Spence*, for instance, the antecedent action and the transitional information are subordinated, merely hinted or even suppressed. Simply, almost instinctively it seems, attention is thus directed to a brief period of action in a single main scene. Though this focusing is not in the ballads highly developed, it shows that even popular narrative was not confined to the tale, that it knew not only lucid summary, but also some degree of intensification. For even if the ballads go back less far into oral tradition than is commonly supposed, they are certainly popular and certainly not modern. Even popular and fairly early narrative, then, shows the narrative value of intensification, and shows moreover that a fundamental method of intensification is to limit the story in place and time.

The lesson of narrative intensification is naturally clearer in other stories which, though still early, are works of individual genius. Strip Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale* of the introduction and digression which are merely its dramatic adjustment to the Canterbury series, and you have in essence a modern short story, sharply intensified by being focused on the crisis of a few consecutive hours. The essential likeness of this tale to a modern short story extends even to the details of narrative technic. Poetically compressed beyond the possibilities of prose, it yet is clearly planned in narrative stages, carried on by dialogue, enhanced by the suggestions of the narrator, advanced to a highly suggestive culmination. It is in every respect a modern short story

in miniature. But the main point of technic is its intensification by limitation. This selective method may be seen less sharply in the *Tale of the Nun's Priest*, Chaucer's delicious version of the old beast-fable of the Cock and the Fox, in one or two of his *fabliaux*, as in other medieval stories of this type, and in a few stories of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.¹ It is even found now and then much earlier. Neither generally popular, nor quite distinct as a literary form until modern times, it has from of old been a distinct narrative method.

Showing all the narrative essentials (page 161), concrete realization, emotional interpretation, and, even in its limited scope, movement, the short story relies mainly on the second, on interpretation. Interpretation, the shaping of the story to carry a single emotional impression, so dominates the other two essentials as to make this form of intense realization distinct from the extensive realization of epic, romance, and novel. This process of unification consists in imaginatively enhancing one scene at one time, in making a brief period eloquent of both past and future, in dwelling on a single situation till it yields its full emotion. For narrative unity is not negative; its limitation is solely for the purpose of filling the limits. It makes part of the tale tell the whole story fully. When we say that the seventh chapter of *Judges*, which recounts the victory of Gideon and his chosen few, or the eighteenth chapter of *Second Samuel*, with its tragedy of the death of Absalom, or the story of Daniel in the lions' den, or any one of a hundred other chapters in history, *would make* a short story, we do not mean that it *is* a short story; for its realization is not full. It isolates the situation without intensifying; it is unified without being filled. And this is so partly because the object of these narratives is not, except by the way, imagi-

¹ For technical analysis of the *Decameron* see C. S. Baldwin, *American Short Stories*, pages 26-28.

native realization, and partly because they are chapters in a longer narrative. None the less our modern preoccupation in distinguishing such scenes or chapters, in seizing them from their context in history or in life, is right. They would make short stories because, whether from accident or from design, they are complete, self-consistent, carrying within their brief course the suggestion of both past and future.

That they lack full realization does not make them the less instructive practically. For they show how much even a single situation may yield of narrative movement (see page 189), how unity is achieved not only by limiting time and place, but also by the dominance throughout of a single character, and how eloquent are even meager suggestions of speech and gesture, such as the young David's putting away of Saul's armor (*1 Samuel* xvii. 39), or Joab's dialogue with the young man who reported to him the plight of Absalom (*2 Samuel* xviii. 11-14). Occasional ampler suggestions of such details — Esther's "If I perish, I perish," David's "Absalom, my son, my son!" — stand out among the memorable passages of literature, and show what the whole story would be, told on that scale.

Thus even early stories show how much narrative intensity comes from isolating a crisis, from holding attention on its main person, and from moving within its short time scene by scene to a climax. Modern art invites us further to intensify within these limits by increasing the number of concrete suggestions, by realizing more distinctly the persons and the scene, till the actions sketched in a page are brought out in six pages. This is to bring the story home; but no less to bring the story home is the narrative device of limitation. The two are complementary. The whole art of narrative, reduced to its essence, consists in selecting and intensifying situations; and for practical

study of it the best form, as it is the only distinct form, is the short story.

5. History and Biography

From all these narrative forms we sharply distinguish nowadays history and biography. These we hardly think of as imaginative composition; we conceive them usually as discussion. Yet they are still narrative to the extent of being mainly chronological; and in earlier times they were narrative more frankly and more largely. As the word *history* and the word *story* are etymologically the same, so our modern distinction between narrative of fact and narrative of fiction was not made in early narrative. Not only were both frankly traditional; both were called by the same name. Neither the word nor the thing was clearly differentiated. *Historia*, or its vernacular derivative, was applied indifferently to Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of the kings of Britain, which is largely imaginative, to other narratives more historical in our modern sense, and to the story of the Holy Grail, which is both legendary and poetic. Consequently there is no sharp distinction of literary form between the medieval histories and the medieval romances. In either the story is told in much the same way.

A fairly clear distinction, however, appears in the word *chronicle*. A chronicle was a record, usually a bare diary. The "Anglo-Saxon" Chronicle, for instance, is neither history nor story in our modern sense, but merely material for either (see page 168). How an earlier historian composed such material, and also the legendary material which to him seemed historical also, is seen typically in Herodotus. There is very evidently a plan of the whole; though the order is generally chronological, chronology is not regarded as sufficient of itself; and there is a clear intention to present details imaginatively, sometimes in scenes handled as

the scenes of fiction. A more modern method is typified by Thucydides. Though he keeps the imaginative realization of scenes and enhances the imaginative realization of persons, he turns the composition of the whole toward the logical unity sought by discussion. The interpretation as a whole is less that of poetic than that of rhetoric. In modern times, history has grown into forms less and less narrative, more and more expository, until to-day its narrative is typically not story at all in the usual sense, but a statement of facts identical in kind with that of a lawyer's brief, because adapted to the same purpose.

Without attempting to estimate the profit and loss of this recent trend,¹ we may see that the appeal of earlier histories, and of such modern histories as are also stories, is to an interest still very lively, especially in the young. Such historical narratives as those of Froissart or Villani are still read because their facts are not merely verified and recounted, but also visualized. They interpret history imaginatively as the deeds of persons. Whether this is more or less important than to interpret it logically as social movements, it is at any rate still desired. And probably men and women will always desire, not only to be informed concerning facts and enlightened as to their bearing, but also to be stimulated toward realizing them imaginatively as deeds. In distinguishing sharply between history and story we have gained in clearness of conception; the two should never be confused. But we unduly restrict our historical art when we make the method of the one exclusive of the method of the other. Like argument (page 152), exposition of history needs the help of imaginative realization. That this may be extravagant or dishonest only makes more important the using of it well. With historical material, above all other

¹ Compare on this point Macaulay's essay on *History* with his own practise.

material of exposition, the art of presentation must add poetic to rhetoric. Extravagance of imagination may be due to the very segregation of it with dreams apart from facts. In no field may imagination be more wholesome and fruitful than in history. If it were exercised oftener in college, we might in time have historical studies written that would be the nearer to truth for being readable.

That imaginative appeal should not be restricted to fiction is obvious in that branch of history which we separate, and neglect, as biography. To present a man or a woman truly is a task demanding skill in both fields of composition, that of ideas and that of images. More biographies would be read if more were better written. Neither a cyclopedic chronicle of facts nor on the other hand a so-called historical novel meets this opportunity. The art of Plutarch and the art of Plato, though not in detail adaptable to our time, continue to show that strong imaginative effects may be achieved within a length feasible for college students, that these effects help, not hinder, the logical interpretation, and above all that biography on these terms must always be worth writing. Biography answers a perennial popular demand for great examples; and it gives far more scope than is generally realized for originality, not only in variety and proportion of treatment, but in the conception and movement of the whole.

History and biography, then, are in a border-land between rhetoric and poetic. In recent times they have passed over largely to the former; but earlier experience shows conclusively their opportunity also in the latter. From this they may not only learn to give their specific and verified detail in concrete language, but also borrow, in ways various enough for the highest originality, the art of narrative movement.

II. THE TECHNIC OF NARRATIVE MOVEMENT

1. Writing by Scenes

Centuries of story-telling show certain ways of composition to be generally effective for narrative movement. The first of these may be called writing by scenes; i.e., composing the story by stages, each distinct and full, each preparing for the next, all leading up to a satisfying conclusion. This at once suggests logical composition of a speech or essay by paragraphs (page 40); and the likeness holds to a certain extent. Each scene, like each paragraph, is determined by the plan of the whole, and in turn furthers the whole coherence. A clear issue for each scene is the best means of enabling the reader to follow surely to the next, as paragraph emphasis (page 51) is the surest means toward the coherence of the whole. Farther the resemblance does not go. A scene is not like a paragraph. Its unity is not of a controlling idea, but of a controlling emotion. So the plan of a story is not a course of ideas grasped intellectually, but a course of actions realized as significant emotionally. The barely sketched scene (2 *Samuel* xviii. 11-14) between Joab and the soldier who reported the plight of Absalom has no underlying proposition. It cannot be summed up in a sentence. Yet it is dominated by the feeling of Joab's ruthless and single-minded certitude. It is quite distinct in itself; and it is a crisis in the action. It shows the inevitable course of the story, pointing ahead toward its tragic close. The following instance from a long modern novel shows the same sort of composition. General Webb finds himself cheated of due honor by the Duke of Marlborough's report in the gazette.

Mr. Webb, reading the gazette, looked very strange — slapped it down on the table — then sprung up in his place, and began, "Will your Highness please to —"

His Grace the Duke of Marlborough here jumped up too — "There's some mistake, my dear General Webb."

"Your Grace had best rectify it," says Mr. Webb, holding out the letter. But he was five feet off his Grace the Prince-Duke, who besides was higher than the General . . . and Webb could not reach him, tall as he was.

"Stay," says he with a smile, as if catching at some idea; and then, with a perfect courtesy, drawing his sword, he ran the gazette through with the point and said, "Permit me to hand it to your Grace." — THACKERAY, *Henry Esmond*, Book II, Chapter xv.

This is at once distinct, or unified, in the sense of impressing a single emotion, and suggestive in the sense of making us wonder and guess ahead. In both senses it is significant. By making it distinct and self-consistent Thackeray best makes the whole story move on and also lead up to a satisfying close. The value of narrative emphasis to narrative coherence may be expressed technically, then, in the maxim, Write by scenes; make each scene fully distinct to the imagination for itself; make it significant for the whole story by making it prepare for the final scene; write every scene for the climax of them all.

Narrative movement, then, consists practically in working from crisis to crisis. Conversely, those stories which lack movement lack distinct crises. They lack salience. Much amateur narrative is dull because no moment stands out. The story is on a dead level. This effect, of course, is produced by summary, as in many dull tales; and in tales that are not dull at least some parts emerge as distinct scenes. The level narrative of Defoe (page 201) would be dull but for the extraordinary force of its concreteness. The livelier and more exciting narrative of Smollett (page 202) is written by scenes. The significance of his scenes in a plodding but steady development of character saves Richardson's proximity from becoming intolerable; and in the art of writing by

scenes Fielding (page 204) is a master. The same technical means of movement may be seen outside of fiction. Those chapters of history which most stir imagination and remain in memory are written so. The *Book of Daniel* thus makes salient the writing on the wall and the lions' den. The history of Joseph in the *Book of Genesis* is clearly composed by memorable crises, each one distinctly significant toward the inevitable issue: the complication at the well, the complication with Potiphar's wife, the crisis of the dreams, the recognition scene. The saliences of the *Book of Esther* are dramatically vivid: Mordecai's refusal to bow to Haman, "What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor?" "If I perish, I perish," and the denunciation at the banquet. As story-telling may be said to start from the discernment of crises, so it goes on by writing from crisis to crisis.

For that this method is essential is seen even in brief narrative. The story of the death of Absalom (*2 Samuel* xviii) stands out vividly from its context, and will always be remembered and quoted, because, though it is not realized fully, the tragic emotion is brought out stage by stage.¹ Each scene prepares for the next and for the final issue; we are led on step by step. First is the old king's review of his loyal army as they go out to crush rebellion. Rebellion must be crushed; but must the arch-rebel be crushed too? Hoping against reason, the old king pathetically charges, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man." He is after all so young; and he is after all my son. At last the name is brought out, "even with Absalom." Here we have the whole tragic situation; but we know nothing definitely of how it will be worked up.

Then come the battle and the defeat, passed over rapidly

¹ This paragraph and the three following are quoted from the author's *The English Bible as a Guide to Writing*, pages 139-142.

because the story is of individuals. "The wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured." What then? We come at once to the main actors. Absalom in headlong flight is caught by the hair. Joab, with brutal frankness, cries, "And behold thou sawest him? And why didst thou not smite him?" We begin to see how events will slip from David's control because his chieftains are too headstrong and too uncompromising for him. The scene is more exciting, more intense, than the preceding. At the same time it is a thoroughly natural sequel. Joab smites. After that stroke ten others follow. Joab sounds the recall. He is not merely bloody. He has struck the chief. The rest are scattered. It is all over.

No. What of the king now? He is waiting, still miserably hoping. Up springs Ahimaaz, begging for the privilege of breaking the news. But Joab thinks the friend's way may not be the kindest, or perhaps he fears that version of his stroke. His words sound hesitant. He sends Cush. But Ahimaaz still begs; and Joab, still hesitating, lets him go.

How will the king take it? This is the last scene. We see it with his eyes. We are taken back to the gate to watch the runners coming. There is increasing intensity of suspense here. First the watchman sights a moving speck. "If he be alone," says the king, "there is tidings." "Behold another man." "He also," says the breathless king, "bringeth tidings." "The running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz." The king catches at a last straw. "He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings." At last the king is face to face with the news. We lean forward with him as Ahimaaz cries victory. We hear his low question, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" There is a dreadful pause while Ahimaaz equivocates for love. The king knows. Does he not hear the ominous words "Joab" — "tumult"? But he nerves himself. "Turn aside, and stand

here." He repeats his question to Cushie. The answer, still indirect, is but too plain. The bolt has fallen. Love and loyalty cannot parry it. "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Much of the tremendous force of this memorable climax is the force of momentum, the force of the movement that carries us scene by scene to the last.

2. Climax

This implies, in proportion as a story is made intense, writing the whole story toward the close, writing for the end, or climax. The word *climax* has come to be used technically in two distinct senses. As applied to plays, it is often used to mean that particular crisis in the midst of the action which is the turning-point; as applied to stories it is more generally used to mean the final scene, the issue, or outcome. Used in this latter sense, the climax determines the whole story. We might almost say that it *is* the whole story; for no one really has a story to write until he has its climax. There the whole story comes out in its final significance. The end of a fairy story, simplest example of all, is the satisfaction of poetic justice; the slipper fits, and Cinderella is a princess. The popular fable of the Cock and the Fox formulates its theme, as many fables do, in the final retort of the cock on his escape. The whole *Pardoner's Tale* of Chaucer (page 207) is emotionally summed up in the dead bodies of the three who dared death. This last climax is at once felt to be more purely narrative. It is no logical iteration of the theme, but an inevitable outcome of the characters through the action; its final significance is emotional. Thus a narrative climax is no summary, but the scene which images in action the final revelation.

"To arms! — to arms! — the Prussians." And the four Uhlans of the advance guard might have seen up there, on the balcony, a tall old man stagger, wave his arms, and fall. This time Colonel Jouve was dead.

— Close of ALPHONSE DAUDET'S *Le Siège de Berlin*.

The little seamstress gazed at this letter a long time. Perhaps she was wondering in what Ready Letter-Writer of the last century Mr. Smith had found this form. Perhaps she was amazed at the results of his first attempt at punctuation. Perhaps she was thinking of something else, for there were tears in her eyes and a smile on her small mouth.

But it must have been a long time, and Mr. Smith must have grown nervous, for presently another communication came along the line where the top of the cornice was worn smooth. It read:

If not understood will you marry me

The little seamstress seized a piece of paper and wrote:

If I say Yes, will you speak to me?

Then she rose and passed it out to him, leaning out of the window, and their faces met.

— Close of H. C. BUNNER'S *Love-Letters of Smith*.

A classic instance of climax achieved by gathered momentum is the close of Poe's *Fall of the House of Usher*. Thus the quaint maxim that a story should be written backwards means practically that the writer, once he has conceived the situation, and before he starts the action on its course, should realize the climax, not merely as an idea, nor in general, but in the very actions and gestures and speech of his characters in the final scene.

3. Complication and Solution

A traditional formula for narrative movement is expressed in the French *noûment* and *dénoûment*, tying and untying, complication and solution. The story involves its characters in difficulty and then extricates them; the earlier course

weaves a plot, and the conclusion solves it. The complication of *Cinderella* is the successive acts of cruel selfishness by the stepmother and stepsisters and finally the loss of the slipper; the solution is, The slipper fits. This, indeed, is common to many sorts of stories, still more common in plays, and most common in farce. But it is too general to give much practical guidance in narrative movement; and it is often applied formally and mechanically. So applied, it may quite defeat narrative movement by cutting a story in two. Thus it will make the same damaging interruption as those stars which amateurs are fond of writing across the page to indicate a break in the action. The action should not break. To compose a story by scenes is not to break it into separate episodes. On the contrary, it is to prepare the way for that constant movement which is the life of narrative. The distinctness of each scene does not halt us; it leads us on. The significance which unifies a scene is its suggestion of what may ensue; and the suggestions cumulate up to the final revelation.

The idea of complication, however, though not sufficient as a story plan, may be helpful in the earlier stages of thinking the story out before writing. Complication suggests the value of suspense, the value of such obstacles as may bring out character and enhance the interest of plot. It should suggest also exploring the possibilities of interaction (page 189), of using fully the revelation of one character by another. This may promote narrative movement by providing a way to avoid tedious explanation and description, or the chronological enumeration characteristic of summary tales.

Solution, in a general sense, is necessary. The close must be satisfying — not merely satisfactory in the sense of being approved, but satisfying in the sense of making us feel the story “natural” or “convincing.” When we say that a

story is convincing, we mean that the emotion it has aroused is satisfied. The story, we feel, had to end in that way. We are bored or offended by those amateur endings which are mere surprises, or, still more crudely, mere reversals of the story's course. For complication and solution, most simply and fundamentally considered, mean cause and effect, as in the inevitable issue of the character of Joseph or Moses. Surprised we often like to be, but only when we are also satisfied, when we can say, "I did not think of that; but it would be so." In O. Henry's story the shop-girl who wished to marry a millionaire finally marries the sweetheart of her friend the laundress. This is a surprise, but almost in the same breath it is a satisfaction; for the story, without divulging this *dénoûment*, has prepared us for it as a convincing solution of character. Solution thus broadly means emotional satisfaction, the assured outcome of those characters in those situations. It does not necessarily mean a full working out of the issues. That is more typical of a play. On the stage the solution usually demands, in proportion to the whole course of action, more time. A story, especially a modern story, often ends with a suggestion. We are even impatient nowadays of stories that work out what we can readily imagine for ourselves. But, however brief, the suggestion must be clear. We demand to know enough to keep as the total result a single clear emotion. We prefer, indeed, in reading Daudet's *La Dernière Classe*, not to be told just what M. Hamel did after his last class; but that is because it is all clearly suggested by the emotion of his last words on the blackboard. The final suggestion is pregnant.

4. Weaving In

In the large, then, narrative movement is sustained movement, or momentum, the composing of a story in such a way that its opening will claim an interest which its course

will enhance and its conclusion will satisfy. The technic is like the technic of discussion in so far as it too consists of taking hold, going on, and bringing home (page 55); but since what a story seizes, holds, and reveals is emotional, its course is not by paragraphs; it is by scenes, by imaginative significances. We are carried on, not from idea to idea to a conclusion, but from suggestion to suggestion to a revelation. Therefore the detail of story technic differs from the technic of the paragraph. The aim of a story being to create and keep an illusion of actual experience, a sense of sharing in the action, the technic of detail consists essentially in making the story move always as a story, always by images. Negatively this means suppressing explanation and comment; positively it means making everything that is included part of the course of the story.

The fundamental narrative principle of concreteness (page 165) bids us express always in terms of the sensations of the actors, not in terms of the author's reflection or summary. Narrative always proceeds most surely by suggesting images directly, not by explaining or commenting. Explanation or comment almost always interrupts the movement, and always tends, as we say, to break the spell. We prefer to have the writer provide the experience and to make our own reflections. We may even resent comment as officious. Sometimes we find ourselves saying mentally, Go on; it is your persons and your events that I wish, not you. Thus one of the first tasks of revision is to free the story from clogs (page 181), to give it a straight course. To keep oneself out of his story does not mean being unsympathetic or detached; it means making the story seem to tell itself, to move without being from time to time wound up, to be all story and not partly essay. That is why the Norse sagas, even when they are stinted and abrupt, hold interest. They are straight narrative, uninterrupted by comment.

As the narrator should not tell us what to think or feel, but make the actions of his characters suggest that thought or feeling, so he need not make his characters describe their feelings or think aloud for our information. Neither way is necessary. The author's comment may interrupt, and his character's soliloquy may disconcert. Since sane people do not commonly talk to themselves or think aloud, this device is likely to seem artificial, to remind us that we are after all only reading, to break the spell. And in most cases it is as unnecessary as it is feeble. With practise, almost any story can be told throughout narratively. The information necessary to clearness can be hinted in the action and dialogue. The reader, feeling himself in the same position as when he picks up clues from a group of actors in real life, has more of the excitement and pleasure of discovery and more of the feeling of participation. Of course, the writer must make sure that the clues are clear. This is more difficult than to play the part of officious bystander or to make the actors stop acting while they explain themselves; but it is not beyond even amateur skill, and it adds to the zest of writing as well as of reading. A story thus becomes an interesting economy, in which every act, every word, every gesture, is significant, in which nothing insignificant hinders the course.

a. LIMITING THE TIME OF ACTION

The problem of making a story all story is felt most keenly in narrative openings. How to take hold promptly, clearly, and significantly is a problem fresh for every story and always demanding ingenuity. Tales, and especially *exempla* (page 196), ancient and modern, usually give it up by putting all the necessary information into an introduction. But introductions are not only unfashionable; they have the two inherent defects of failing to arouse curiosity at the start

and of necessitating a break. Our feeling that whatever properly belongs to the story should be in the story, not partly outside, is the desire to be under the narrative spell from the beginning. A story that does not promise this spell in its first words runs the risk of being passed by. That is why, in a day that offers stories by the hundred, most stories claim attention by beginning with action or dialogue.

What, then, of the events before the chosen series of critical actions that constitute the story proper? They are to be woven in as hints. The action suggests them while it moves on; the characters refer to them in conversation without ceasing to reveal their immediate concerns. How much of this is necessary? Though there can be no fixed proportion, the first answer to the amateur is, Less than you think. The larger answer is that before considering in detail *how* to begin, the writer had better decide *when* to begin. Generally the point of beginning should be as late as is possible without omitting any action that is immediately significant. The advice to begin "in the middle" means practically to begin in the thick. By having his attention fixed on that comparatively brief period in which events come to a head, the reader living through this in imagination will readily understand all that he needs of what happened before and after. People who insist on beginning at the beginning forget that there is no beginning. Our lives are so commingled and crossed, events are derived from causes so remote, that if we are too anxious to begin at the beginning our readers may move away before we have fairly started. The very object of telling a story is to isolate from the throng of happenings something highly significant by itself. In order to heighten its significance, to express its distinct emotion, the narrator omits all that is distracting, compresses and subordinates all that is merely explanatory, and especially limits the time and place. Life

goes on without pause. In history, in the daily newspapers, in experience, it unrolls thousands of stories all tangled together. The story-teller's art is to pick out one story at a time by discerning its crises, and to make it stand out by itself without leaning heavily on the past.

All this is applied habitually to the short story, which is the extreme example of the narrative method of interpretation by isolation; but in general it applies also to longer stories. They too remove clogs of superfluous comment and close unnecessary breaks, in order to provide an uninterrupted series of significant actions. How much further they should limit time and place depends in each case on the importance of single impression and rapid movement. Generally these are less important in a long story; for there the spell may be broken and resumed again and again. Novels are not usually read through at a sitting; nor can attention be long held to a focus. Moreover a long story may gain less by intensity than by fulness (page 205); and unity of impression is less important for the whole than for each single scene or chapter. In any case, the device of limiting time and place is never worth while, even for a short story, if it squeezes out those actions in which the reader naturally desires to participate. If such actions are merely hinted or reported, the reader will be left unsatisfied. It is far better to extend the time or shift the scene of action than to omit a suggestive crisis.

b. DIALOGUE

For weaving in narratively what must be included, the commonest device is dialogue. While it helps the illusion of actuality and reveals the appearance, mood, and character of the speakers, it may also give the necessary hints of what has happened before or is happening elsewhere. The swift opening of *The Ancient Mariner* uses dialogue to weave in:

(1) the occasion, (2) the description of the mariner, both in physical details and still more in the uncanny and compelling effect of his personality, and (3) the mood of each speaker and its contrast with the scene. A device common in ballads, from which Coleridge learned it, and used, though less skillfully, even in fairy stories, dialogue is one of the surest means of narrative rapidity. It is economically suggestive, both revealing and stimulating, doing two things at once. In this it is typical of the whole narrative method of weaving in by interaction. Instead of explaining causes historically or psychologically, we exhibit effects in the action of one person on another. The antecedent action and the characters of the actors are thus neither summarized nor discussed; they are expressed directly, as it were before our eyes and ears. There is no line between past and present, between character and plot. All that is vital is combined in continuous movement. Thus the technic of narrative movement consists largely in avoiding non-conductors, in providing direct contacts.

A typical instance of this economy is the opening of Stevenson's *Beach of Falesá*.

I saw that island first when it was neither night nor morning. The moon was to the west, setting, but still broad and bright. To the east, and right amidships of the dawn, which was all pink, the daystar sparkled like a diamond. The land breeze blew in our faces, and smelt strong of wild lime and vanilla: other things besides, but these were the most plain; and the chill of it set me sneezing. I should say I had been for years on a low island near the line, living for the most part solitary among natives. Here was a fresh experience: even the tongue would be quite strange to me; and the look of these woods and mountains, and the rare smell of them, renewed my blood.

The captain blew out the binnacle lamp.

"There!" said he, "there goes a bit of smoke, Mr. Wiltshire, behind the break of the reef. That's Falesá, where your station

is, the last village to the east — nobody lives to windward — I don't know why. Take my glass, and you can make the house out."

I took the glass; and the shores leaped nearer, and I saw the tangle of the woods and the breach of the surf; and the brown roofs and the black insides of houses peeped among the trees.

"Do you catch a bit of white there to the east'ard?" the captain continued. "That's your house. Coral built, stands high, veranda you could walk on three abreast; best station in the South Pacific. When old Adams saw it, he took and shook me by the hand. 'I've dropped into a soft thing here,' says he. — 'So you have,' says I, 'and time too.' Poor Johnny! I never saw him again but the once, — and then he had changed his tune, — couldn't get on with the natives, or the whites, or something; and the next time we came around he was dead and buried. I took and put up a bit of stick to him: 'John Adams, *obit* eighteen and sixty-eight. Go thou and do likewise.' I missed that man. I never could see much harm in Johnny."

"What did he die of?" I inquired.

"Some kind of sickness," says the captain. "It appears it took him sudden. Seems he got up in the night, and filled up on Pain-Killer and Kennedy's Discovery. No go; he was booked beyond Kennedy. Then he had tried to open a case of gin. No go again: not strong enough. Then he must have turned to and run out on the veranda, and capsized over the rail. When they found him, the next day, he was clean crazy — carried on all the time about some one watering his copra. Poor John."

"Was it thought to be the island?" I asked.

"Well, it was thought to be the island, or the trouble, or something," he replied. "I never could hear but what it was a healthy place. Our last man, Vigours, never turned a hair. He left because of the beach — said he was afraid of Black Jack and Case and Whistling Jimmie, who was still alive at the time, but got drowned soon afterward when drunk. As for old Captain Randall, he's been here any time since eighteen-forty, forty-five. I could never see much harm in Billy, nor much change. Seems as if he might live to be as old as Kafoozleum. No I guess it's healthy."

"There's a boat coming now," said I. "She's right in the pass; looks to be a sixteen-foot whale; two white men in the stern-sheets."

"That's the boat that drowned Whistling Jimmie," cried the captain; "let's see the glass. Yes, that's Case, sure enough, and the darkie. They've got a gallows bad reputation, but you know what a place the beach is for talking."

CHAPTER VI

DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

I. MOVEMENT REPRESENTED TO SPECTATORS

THE term *drama*, like the term story, is very wide, including not only tragedy, comedy, and melodrama, but also pantomime, pageantry, opera, and film plays. Nevertheless it has in all these forms the constant and distinguishing characteristic of actual representation. All drama differs from all story in being represented. To speak of a drama as a story told on the stage is to speak loosely. A drama usually, indeed, has a story, and the story is told in so far as it is uttered in words; but some forms of drama dispense with words, others make words subsidiary, and all forms of drama have for their primary object, not to tell, but to show. The methods of story-telling are methods of suggestion (page 160); those of drama, methods of representation. To say that a story is dramatic implies that its suggestion approaches representation, as in being partly acted by the narrator, or that its situations would be more impressive if actually represented.

In this regard situations otherwise equally interesting differ widely. Arnold's decision to betray the cause of the American colonies is a significant crisis, as is Lincoln's decision to declare the emancipation of the negro slaves, or, in fiction, Henry Esmond's to renounce the Pretender; but whereas the last would conceivably be enhanced by actually representing on the stage the scene in which Esmond breaks his sword, the two former would gain nothing. The one

could be effectively represented; the other two could not. Haman coming in his pride before King Ahasuerus (*Esther* vi) to contrive the ruin of the Jews, and bidden to honor the Jew Mordecai, is a situation interesting to read or hear, but much more significant if seen. We should like to see Haman's face and attitude; and an actor would like Haman as a part. The dialogue between Haman and the king, in which neither comprehends the drift of the other, while we, comprehending both, are all agog for the issue, would be much more striking on the stage. The emotions are, indeed, conveyed by suggestive telling; but they would be far more impressive in visible expression. By dramatic, then, we mean primarily significant to enact, and to see enacted, in the theater. A situation is not promising for drama unless its significance would be enhanced by representation.

This difference is plain in situations actually chosen for dramatization. The medieval composers who devised the so-called miracle plays (page 232) were not free to choose for values purely dramatic; they felt themselves bound to include some situations which, though important narratively, were tedious or obscure on the stage. In vivid contrast to these are certain crises which by sheer dramatic virtue became, even in hands so inexpert, strongly moving. Abraham's leading of his son Isaac to the altar of sacrifice was dramatic essentially in that the emotions of father and son became much more poignant, however crude the lines, by being enacted. The mere process of enaction warped other scenes from their original intention. The refusal of Noah's wife to enter the ark must have become comic merely by being acted; and in time it came to supply in the traditional series of scenes a regular interlude of comedy. Similarly the visual effects of the part of Satan on the stage turned his malignity into mischief and made the Devil traditionally a comic character. The actual effects of a play being

primarily and fundamentally visual, the first task of playwriting is to insure visual values.

This means that playwriting is less the writing of dialogue — which, indeed, is often written last and always revised after the play has been tried on the stage — than the composition of action, stage business, and even grouping and pose. But it means something deeper. The emotions that are thus enhanced by representation before a crowd are typically such as are best felt by the crowd together, such as are communal. A drama is a composition interesting for an audience to see in the further sense that the seeing of it draws the audience together in a common emotion. Witness the perennial popularity of history plays. Indeed, the merit of a play is fairly measured by this drawing of the audience together. A play is made, not primarily to be read by individuals, though it may also be read with interest, but to be seen by a crowd. This is the main object of all its composition.

Far earlier than professional dramatic composition, and far wider, is the history of drama. Drama has arisen again and again spontaneously from the natural love of acting. Many children's games are dramatic; and many are centuries old. Centuries old also is *Punch and Judy*, and well-nigh universal. To act oneself and to cooperate in the acting of others is a tendency so old and so wide-spread as to seem almost like an instinct.¹ In earlier civilizations this instinct for acting was applied to certain popular observances of religion. Greek drama began in the rites celebrated annually by the whole village to honor Dionysus, the god of fertility and enthusiasm. In the shouting, singing chorus there were at first no actors in the modern sense; but that was because in a broader sense all were actors. There was

¹ This paragraph and the three following are adapted from the author's *Writing and Speaking*, pages 412-415.

rude, impromptu mimic action, as in "So the farmer sows his seed" and similar games. There was probably a good deal of improvised verse by individuals, and probably a good deal of recurring refrain by the whole crowd. Out of this communal impersonation at the vintage of the story of Dionysus grew very naturally individual impersonations of the god and his more prominent mythical attendants, the crowd responding with impromptu variations of the familiar refrain. Every crowd produces a leader. The leader of the Greek chorus became an actor in the modern sense of taking a fixed part. In time other fixed parts were assigned to individuals, till the mimic action had a definite dialogue; but the chorus persisted as representative of the whole community.

Then, as always, came the individual genius to discern the capacity of what had been wrought by the people, to reveal and enlarge that capacity, and to fix a great form of art. Æschylus, and after him Sophocles and Euripides, shaped the drama to express the ideals of the Greek race and their own individual genius; but it always remained answerable to its original popular impulse. The Greek throng upon the open seats of the theater under the clear sky during the great period of Greek drama felt, not only that the chorus chanting in the orchestra represented them, but that they themselves were assisting at a communal celebration. The drama was always the enactment of their mythology or history, known to every spectator by heart. It was always judged sternly, not only by its poetic beauty, but by its faithfulness to their beliefs and their feelings. Its success was measured by the feeling of the community.

So in medieval France and England, in a society quite different otherwise, indeed, but similar in communal religious observance and in general ignorance of reading, arose the modern drama. The medieval community center was the church; and the drama arose from the communal

observance of the great annual Church festivals. "Whom seek ye?" came the thrilling chant at Easter, when the whole village or city district would be gathered in the parish church. And then, in further response, "He is not here; He is risen." To make this interlude more impressive, the clergy had it chanted responsively by singers impersonating the angel and the women. So at Christmas there were responses of the angels and the shepherds. These so effectively answered the popular feeling that in time other scenes from the sacred history were thus recited; the custom passed out of the church; and the whole town, through its trade unions, maintained an annual series of dramatic representations, setting all the main scenes of the Bible. Each scene, provided by a separate gild, was mounted on a cart and drawn through the market-place before the church, where the spectators were assembled in the open air. *Miracles* these series were called, as representing the most dramatic scenes of Revelation; or *mysteries*, as representing the supernatural truths of the creed. As the separate scenes were represented and combined with better skill, they opened the way for other representations of dramatic scenes from history, and so for the predecessors of Shakespeare. From the beginning, then, modern drama also was a popular performance, developed in response to a popular demand, and always answerable to the people.

In both the ancient development and the modern, mark that the drama was there before it was written, before there was any thought of writing it. The drama is primarily, not a literary product, but a popular product. It began, not as something written by a man of letters and then acted before the people, but as something acted by the people and only afterward written down for preservation. In spite of all differences of time and race, drama has always depended, more than any other form of composition except

oratory, upon immediate appeal to the people. Romance and lyric may be enjoyed by oneself apart; but epic and drama are communal. Epic grew out of the hero-songs of the clan; drama, out of the choral celebration of the village. Since epic early passed out of popular life, drama has been for centuries the only form of literature that people can enjoy together. What spectators as a crowd can watch with sympathetic interest, and feel some share in — that is properly called dramatic.

II. MOVEMENT REPRESENTED BY ACTION

From the fundamental necessity for visual significance springs the necessity on the stage for continuous action. Spectators in the theater wish to see the actors doing something, not merely describing or explaining, but acting. The actor, on his side, finds his part good when its characterization is so composed as to be good not merely to say and to hear, but to do and to see. This does not mean that the action on the stage must be bustling, or even rapid, but that it should be the constant method of unfolding the play. For drama, though it includes spectacle, is something more. Though scenery is no less visible than action, its interest for a crowd can never be so keen nor so continuous. Properly it is a background devised to liberate the action from all description and to give salience. It is subsidiary, not primary, still less necessary. On the Greek stage scenery was meager and mainly typical or symbolic. On the Elizabethan stage also it consisted of such mere hints as could be supplied by an inner curtain and a little typical furniture. Recent revivals of Elizabethan plays in the Elizabethan manner have demonstrated that modern audiences, though accustomed to scenic elaboration, find keen dramatic enjoyment in mere action. To conclude that modern plays

should be presented without scenery would be as absurd as to return from electric light to candles. We should of course use all our dramatic means; and one of these means is scenery. Far from being abandoned, scenery should be made to tell all it can. But it is dramatic only when it is thus contributory, not when it is only beautiful or ingenious, still less when it is elaborate, least of all when it is distracting. Pageantry and other forms of stage spectacle which rely most on scenery rely also on the massing of large groups. Intended for a large stage, and most effective out of doors, they shift the emphasis from the individual actors to mass effects and choruses, and offer rather a succession of tableaux, dances, and music than a play. It is no disparagement of these broad effects to say that they are less intensely dramatic, or rather that any stage representation gives that particular pleasure which we call dramatic in proportion as it moves by the actions of individual actors. And practically playwriting, as distinct from pageantry, consists fundamentally in devising a steady and increasingly significant course of action.

III. MOVEMENT REPRESENTED BY INTERACTION

The persons of a play, as those of a story, are revealed, not only by what they say and do for themselves, but by the effects of this on the other persons and by the effects of the other persons on them. On the stage this interaction is more important than in a story. In a story it is a means of movement (page 188); in a play it is *the* means. No person on the stage can be left at any time without something to do or say which will indicate his reaction to what is then going on. If he is to be in that scene at all, his being there must visibly add to its significance; he must constantly,

whether by speech, action, or attitude, share in the common action. That he must have his part does not mean merely that he must come forward now and again to the center of attention; he may even be most of the time in the background; but it does mean that whatever anybody does or says must have its visible effect on everybody else. One of the most strikingly dramatic moments in the play of *King Oedipus* as acted is the effect on Jocasta (line 1020) of the dialogue between the king and the stranger from Corinth. Yet at the moment Jocasta does not say a word. The effect is altogether by "business." On the stage no one must be forgotten in a corner. The commonest challenge of the actors to the forgetful amateur playwright is, "What am I supposed to be doing now?" This is the reason for the full stage directions in a prompt-book. Whether provided in advance by the playwright, or revised or filled in by the manager or the actors, they account for everybody on the stage at the time. "Crosses L." "Comes down C." "Turns her back and leans against the table." "Hesitates in the doorway." "Starts to speak, but sinks back, trembling." — such stage directions indicate the constant need of interaction even where the person has no lines.¹ The fact that such indications of stage "business" are sometimes overdone, sometimes so over-anxious as to hinder instead of helping the actors, should not blind an amateur playwright to the necessity of visualizing every scene as an interaction. A scene is not ready for actors until the author has imagined, and usually indicated, not only every line to be spoken, but everybody's action and "business," even to "crossings" and gestures.

The dramatic habit of interaction is seen best, of course, in the great scenes of great plays. The famous screen scene

¹ The reference is to the prompt-book for actual representation, not to the form published for reading.

in the *School for Scandal* affects visibly every person on the stage. One of the most exciting scenes¹ in Shakspeare is that turning-point in *Othello* where Iago, having intoxicated Cassio, pushes Roderigo off to sound the alarm, intervenes hypocritically in the brawl, and turns in mock shame to meet the dignity of Othello's anger. Each character is enhanced by being set off against the others; and the action involves all. So the passion of Lear's summons to Regan slackens, then rises at Gloucester's compassionate excuses, swerves at the liberation of Kent, beats in full flood against Regan's hard reply, and foams away in madness on the arrival of Goneril.

Such using of the *dramatis personæ* constantly against one another makes dramatic characterization ampler and sharper than is possible through the suggestions of story. Narrative cannot attain the distinctness of characterization possible to drama. Not only is the person before us on the stage in flesh and blood, but his sympathizers and antagonists are there too, to interpret his action and enhance his mood. Realization of this typical opportunity of the stage to present persons may suffice in itself, and with little other dramatic interest, to make an acceptable play. A part cannot, indeed, be played alone; but so long as there is plot enough to provide interaction, the play may prevail by the fundamental interest of characterization. In this aspect playwriting may be said to be measured by the ability to write parts; and a play is estimated by an actor primarily as providing good parts.

But the idea of characterization by interaction reaches far enough to suggest also another fundamental of dramatic plot. What we especially enjoy seeing unfolded before us on the stage, what is more vividly significant on the stage than in a story, is the action of will on will, personalities in

¹ Quoted in part below, § V.

struggle. The *Book of Esther* is potentially a drama because of the clash of Haman and Mordecai. As the tissue of drama is the action of persons on one another, so its main nerve is a conflict of wills, and this indicates the kind of movement that is typically dramatic. Iago's seduction of Othello is the main line of action by which successively Cassio is betrayed, Desdemona killed, and Othello ruined. This motive of jealousy, working out in strong and subtle interaction among all the main persons, determines a clear onward course. Dramatic movement, or plot, springs from dramatic motive, or characterization. So Cassius makes the ambition of Caesar work upon the patriotism of Brutus until both alike are thwarted by the policy of Antony. The plot of a play is the development of human will through struggle. This is obvious in tragedy; but it is true also of comedy. In either, what we most enjoy in the theater is the realization and the solution of some conflict of wills.

IV. MOVEMENT BY SCENES

So a dramatic scene is typically a crisis of interaction, a situation in which the persons of the play bring out one another. A play is not a procession of characters singly or in pairs; it is a succession of groups. A scene, in other words, is a grouping of persons by interaction to bring out a distinct emotional significance. Thus the French habit of marking as a separate scene whatever follows the entrance or exit of one of the important persons is not merely conventional. Dramatic action goes on steadily; but each entrance or exit marks a distinct stage. Each scene is at once distinct for itself and significant for the onward course. Now Mercutio is dead; so gallant and strong a young life has been sacrificed to the fatal feud; the interaction has been woven to a distinct issue. But the emotion is no more

distinct than significant; something must come of this at once; Romeo is involved, and so Juliet; love is crossed by hate; the action thickens and darkens toward the final tragedy. This scene, then, is typically dramatic. On the one hand, it rouses emotion for itself immediately; it needs no more comment than the scene in which Isaac says to Abraham, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (*Genesis* xxii. 7): on the other hand, it is significant, as the other is, for the further progress; it is critical, decisive, determining.

Plot, the composition of dramatic movement, consists essentially in writing scene by scene; and the task of writing a scene is two-fold. First, the scene should be so grouped that interaction will bring out fully its particular emotional values of pathos, humor, or tragedy; it should be amplified and rounded for itself, or, in the language of the stage, played up. The actors should have time and means to bring their parts out. Secondly, the scene should lead on, should close so significantly as to rouse our interest in its further outcome, should, as actors say, hang over. For the strength of the dramatic chain depends upon the strength of each link. Typical in both these ways is the mistaken denunciation of Creon by Oedipus (*King Oedipus*, 532-630). The tension is increased till the king pronounces not merely banishment, but death. Creon, astounded for a moment into pleading, is outraged to resistance.¹

Oedipus. The king must be obeyed.

Creon. Not if the king
Does evil.

Oedipus. To your king! Ho, Thebes, mine own!

Creon. Thebes is my country, not the king's alone.

¹ The quotation is from the translation of Gilbert Murray, Oxford University Press, 1911.

The scene culminates with the two men facing each other, ready to fight. Upon this enters Jocasta; and her entrance carries the action into a new stage.

Obviously there is a likeness in this respect, though not in others, to composing a speech or essay by paragraphs. Logical coherence is insured by such planning as makes each paragraph a distinct stage of thought (page 40), and by such revision as makes it close (page 51) with an unmistakable message. The coherence of the whole depends on the emphasis of each paragraph; and the more important is coherence, the more important is paragraph emphasis. Thus in argument paragraph emphasis is the chief technical means of cogency. In this aspect a dramatic scene is an emotional paragraph, distinct for itself and eloquent for the rest of the play. As is a paragraph, it is conceived and blocked out in scope and intention before it is cast in words; as a paragraph, though by very different means, it must be worked up amply, developed and rounded; as a paragraph, it must close with a significance so clear as to prepare for what is to follow. Within itself a scene is not like a paragraph; it is developed very differently; but it has a real and instructive likeness in that it is a unit of composition. Plays are written by scenes. The salience of the mood within the scene is the means of heightening the emotion from scene to scene.

1. Clearness of Dramatic Movement

Demanding, more even than story-writing demands (page 214), sustained, progressive, and accelerated movement, play-writing moves from crisis to crisis by emotional significances. But the emotion cannot be strong unless first it is clear. The course of the action must be unmistakable; the audience must never be left in doubt as to the meaning. Though this does not preclude surprise, an audience, far more than a

solitary reader, likes rather to guess ahead, to know more at a given time than the persons on the stage, and at the end to be, not shocked or mystified, but satisfied. The compelling force of *King Oedipus* is enhanced by such gradual unfolding of the past as lets the spectators know at each point more of the awful revelation than is grasped by the persons on the stage. Nor does the fact that in this play, as in many others equally famous, the whole plot was known in general to the spectators before the first performance lessen either the dramatic interest or the dramatic necessity of careful preparation. On the contrary, such disclosures in advance may charge subsequent actions and speeches with deeper significance. When the seer Tiresias, goaded by an accusation at once perverse and natural, retorts to the indignant king, "Thou art thyself the unclean thing" (*King Oedipus*, 353), the situation is so planned that though he reveals to us everything, he reveals to the king nothing. Our knowing all, far from relaxing our interest, enhances it. Our minds, free from all doubt as to the facts, are fixed on the progress of emotion. Thus the pleasure of guessing ahead, which modern story-writing (page 220) learned from drama to give even to readers, is provided usually on the stage with greater care and clearer hints. Whatever information is necessary to full understanding of a situation not only may be, but must be grasped in advance. Often it is repeated, lest there be any doubt. This supplying of the necessary information is sometimes called exposition; but its methods, of course, are utterly different from those of the discussions that go by that name. Dramatic exposition is woven into the action; at its best it is inseparable, the lines or stage business conveying both information and mood, both what we need to know and what we wish to feel.

Iago bids Roderigo seek a quarrel with Cassio (*Othello*, II. i. 271). The conversation prepares us to grasp the sig-

nificance of his sudden entrance later, and meantime adds to the characterization of both speakers. Desdemona, pre-occupied by her solicitude, forgets her handkerchief (*Othello*, III. iii. 287). We see it fall and lie. Emilia, having picked it up, reveals in the following dialogue that Iago had already tried to get it. Why? She asks the question for us; but we know, what she does not, that the purpose must be part of his base plot. Seeing him snatch and keep it, we are prepared for his use of it in later scenes. When Othello demands it of Desdemona, we know not only that her agitation is entirely innocent, but that her danger is the greater because of her renewing just then the plea for Cassio. Technically, then, the problem of exposition is solved by so weaving it in as to make it progressively prepare and enhance.

2. Constancy of Dramatic Movement

a. DRAMATIC OPENING

As in story, one of the chief tasks of the exposition in drama is the adjustment of the opening. To make the opening action rapid enough for interest and yet full enough for clearness, to open at once the past and the future on the stage of the present, is always a test of one's technic. That every one nowadays derides the hackneyed opening in which the butler and the parlor-maid, or the gardener and the cook, are made to converse for the sole purpose of telling the audience the past history and present situation of the family, shows that we dislike to have the exposition separated in a prologue, just as we dislike to have a story prefaced by an introductory lecture (page 222). Give us action at once, we say; you ought to be able to make it tell itself. For as spectators we desire the illusion of assisting in the action and interpreting for ourselves. In order to create this illusion, a modern playwright has to make the opening action carry information while it arouses expectation.

Even so brilliant a play as the *School for Scandal* is slow and halting in its first scenes. The opening conversation, mordant as is its satire, is so far felt to be after all only a prologue that in modern performances it has sometimes been rearranged. The opening of *Macbeth*, on the other hand, which on the page looks more like a prologue, is actually more dramatic in that it gives not only the key, as the opening of the *School for Scandal* does, but also more distinct premonition of the action, and merges into that action more promptly. Shakspeare's most prompt and vivid dramatic opening is in *Othello*. The very first words plunge us into the thick of a dispute that reveals the essentials of the situation. The action, beginning at once, carries the exposition easily without either slurring or pause. As quickly as fully the past is made unmistakably clear. We know it from the lips of all the main persons while they are active in the present crisis. Othello's narrative in the senate, for instance, far from delaying, actually promotes the onward dramatic movement.

A simpler case of effective dramatic opening, terse, clear, and prompt, is Sudermann's *Die ferne Prinzessin*.¹

THE FAR-AWAY PRINCESS

The veranda of an inn. The right side of the stage and half of the background represent a framework of glass enclosing the veranda. The left side and the other half of the background represent the stone walls of the house. To the left, in the foreground, a door; another door in the background, at the left. On the left, back, a buffet and serving-table. Neat little tables and small iron chairs for visitors are placed about the veranda. On the right, in the centre, a large telescope, standing on a tripod, is directed through an open window. ROSA (the waitress),

¹ The quotation is from the translation of Grace Frank in *Roses, Four One-act Plays* by Hermann Sudermann, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914, page 141.

dressed in the costume of the country, is arranging flowers on the small tables. FRAU LINDEMANN (the landlady), a handsome, stoutish woman in the thirties, hurries in excitedly from the left.

FRAU LINDEMANN

There! Now she can come — curtains, bedding — everything fresh and clean as new! No, this honor, this unexpected honor —! Barons and counts have been here often enough. Even the Russian princes sometimes come up from the Springs. I don't bother my head about them — they're just like — that! — But a princess — a real princess!

ROSA

Perhaps it isn't a real princess after all.

FRAU LINDEMANN (*indignantly*)

What? What do you mean by that!

ROSA

I was only thinking that a real princess wouldn't be coming to an inn like this. Real princesses won't lie on anything but silks and velvets. You just wait and see; it's a trick!

FRAU LINDEMANN

Are you going to pretend that the letter isn't genuine; — that the letter is a forgery?

ROSA

Maybe one of the regular customers is playing a joke. That student, Herr Strübel, he's always joking. (*Giggles.*)

FRAU LINDEMANN

When Herr Strübel makes a joke, he makes a decent joke, a real genuine joke. Oh, of course one has to pretend to be angry sometimes — but as for writing a forged letter — My land! — a letter with a gold crown on it — there! (*She takes a letter from her waist, and reads.*) "This afternoon, Her Highness, the Princess von Geldern, will stop at the Fairview Inn, to rest an hour or so before

making the descent to the Springs. You are requested to have ready a quiet and comfortable room, to guard Her Highness from any annoying advances, and, above all, to maintain the strictest secrecy regarding this event, as otherwise the royal visit will not be repeated. Baroness von Brook, maid of Honour to Her Highness." Now, what have you got to say?

ROSA

Herr Strübel lent me a book once. A maid of honor came into that, too. I'm sure it's a trick.

FRAU LINDEMANN (*looking out toward the back*)

Dear, dear, isn't that Herr Strübel now, coming up the hill? To-day of all days! What on earth does he always want up here?

ROSA (*pointedly*)

He's in such favor at the inn. — He won't be leaving here all day.

FRAU LINDEMANN

That won't do at all. He's got to be sent off. If I only knew how I could — Oh, ho! I'll be disagreeable to him — that's the only way to manage it!

(STRÜBEL *enters*. *He is a handsome young fellow without much polish, but cheerful, unaffected, entirely at his ease, and invariably good-natured.*)

STRÜBEL

Good day, everybody.

b. "DRAMATIC UNITIES"

Such openings depend, of course, on wise limiting of the time of action and the place (page 222). Limitation, except in the quite distinct art of film-plays, is more important than in story because of the actual physical limitations of the stage. Effective staging demands compression. The movement of a good play, though never hurried, is never halting or wandering. A play cannot range so freely as a

story. To hold interest on the stage, the action must do without pauses and mere transitions, must be pared down, more than is necessary for a story, to crises. The bringing of crises together, the desire for constant movement, underlies those old maxims, once hotly disputed, called the dramatic unities: unity of time, or action without interruption, as in Greek tragedy; unity of place, or action focused on a single spot, as in all one-act plays and, with negligible variations, in such longer plays as Bernstein's *Voleur*, Besier's *Don*, Kenyon's *Kindling*, Mirbeau's *Les Affaires sont les affaires*; unity of action, or action subordinating all minor parts to a single main course that is clearly dominant.

That the dramatic unities are not necessary to dramatic effectiveness is evident from the success of earlier Elizabethan drama and of French romantic drama. That they may become hampering prescriptions instead of vital principles is suggested by a certain stiffness and artificiality in some French classical dramas. But that they are negligible is a rash assumption. Alike in farce and in tragedy, they are an approved means to intensity. Earlier Elizabethan drama did, indeed, prevail without them; but the superiority of *Othello* to *Tamburlaine*, and to Shakspeare's own earlier plays, reveals something more than Shakspeare's transcendent genius; it shows better playwriting, better composition. There are signs in Marlowe's later plays that he too, if he had lived, would have thus made his undoubted emotional grasp more effective by better dramatic focus. Victor Hugo's romantic tragedies, undoubtedly powerful in many scenes, are the less powerful as wholes because interruptions of the action, unnecessary changes of place or time, impair the consecutive progress of the dominant emotion. Neither the dramatic unities nor any other technical device will make a play good; but their underlying principle of focus will make a potentially good play better.

This underlying principle is all contained in the idea of unity of action. The other unities, those of time and place, are generally important only in so far as they carry out unity of action practically. Indeed, they should be followed or rejected as practical devices. If permitting a lapse of time will give opportunity for putting on the stage a scene desirable for bringing out the main emotion, then that scene should not be crowded out of the play by mere rule. If a change of setting will give opportunity to represent a man's character in stronger relief, then it is sufficiently justified. Given the resources of the modern theater for stage illusion, shifts of time and place may well be considered merely in this aspect. But since, with whatever stage devices, and in however many places, a play must, by the very necessities of the stage, omit much from any conceivable story, since a play must after all depend on a few scenes shown within two hours, the burden of proof is always on the proposal to break in time or in place. The break must be for clear dramatic reason. The assumption is that the play should go on when and where it begins.

Going on in a setting and an hour carefully chosen as critical is the most obvious technical means to consecutiveness; the dramatic unity of action often provides the most favorable condition for leading emotion on, for preparing it, amplifying it, and bringing it home. The situation of Abraham and Isaac is realized most effectively in a single setting. To provide a separate opening scene showing the occasion or the beginning of their journey would merely delay and distract. It would show nothing that is not shown at the place of sacrifice. There is no other ground for unity than this opportunity for fulness and gradual, steady progress. Unity conceived as merely restrictive may be merely a hindrance. A play may be so unified as to be quite static, reduced to mere talk, deprived of those actions

which alone would make the situation dramatically interesting. Such unity is worse than a mere broken succession of really dramatic scenes. The only possible value of unity is to provide an uninterrupted course of significant actions.

3. Fulness of Dramatic Close

That steady progress from scene to scene which is a main dramatic means of enhancing emotion implies culmination. A good play leads up — to what? Of course to its conclusion; but the word conclusion suggests a logical result, and the result of a play is emotional. A play is written, not to explain or to prove, but to bring home. Nevertheless the closing scene of a good play, though its message is not formulated in a proposition, is usually just as definite as the closing paragraph of a good speech. The action has brought us to a definite state of mind. The emotional result is clear. By living with the persons on the stage we have been brought to their state of mind; we feel sympathetically what that state of mind is, and that their actions have brought them to it; we are satisfied. By this is meant, not that the closing scene of a play should be satisfactory, but that it should be satisfying. We may like it or hate it; but we must not find it inconsequential, abrupt, incomplete, or puzzling. A good dramatic close is called convincing; and this means, not that the issue could be proved to be reasonable by argument, but that we have been brought there by the progress of feeling, and that there our feeling rests.

This seems to be the idea underlying Freytag's ¹ division of dramatic movement into exposition, rising action, crisis,

¹ Freytag, *Die Technik des Dramas*, chapter ii, section 2, Fünf Theile und Drei Stellen des Dramas; i.e., (a) Einleitung, (b) Steigerung, (c) Höhenpunkt, (d) Fall oder Umkehr, (e) Katastrophe. MacEwan's translation (page 114) renders these: (a) introduction, (b) rise, (c) climax, (d) return or fall, (e) catastrophe.

falling action, and conclusion. He can hardly have meant, what he has sometimes been taken to mean, that drama typically rises and falls in interest; for to relax interest would be no less fatal in drama than in story. Rather his formula may be taken to express the distinction of drama from story in *noûment* and *dénoûment* (page 218), in complication and solution. Sitting together in the theater, an audience is apt to desire, more than a solitary reader desires of a story, a full and definite solution. The close of a story may be rather briefly suggestive; it may sometimes merely hint; but on the stage we like, as we say, to see just how things turned out. Even if we have guessed ahead — rather because we have guessed ahead — we like to see our guesses come true before our eyes. As a story, *Macbeth* might end with the hero's final disillusionment on the death of his wife while the avengers storm toward him without; on the stage we like to see also his final desperate fight. As a story *Oedipus* might end with the final revelation; as a play it ends with the awful penance of mutilation. Perhaps because the whole dramatic process is representative, not merely suggestive, we expect full representation at the end. Just as the crisis of a play is often more evidently than the crisis of a story a definite turning-point, so the solution is more fully carried out. The Greek dramatic term used by Freytag for the concluding scene of a play is *katastrophe*; and it means, not catastrophe, but conclusion, the issue of the action into a state of rest.

The typically dramatic fulness of solution implies for the playwright definiteness of interpretation. He is able to make his persons live before us on the stage by focus. His selection, his limiting of time and place, his leading from scene to scene, are only the technical means of realizing his emotional intention. He is trying to show us human life, not in random or interrupted glimpses, not in the jumble

and discord of its surface, nor in aimless or frustrated movements, but in the animating emotions of its crises. In order to represent crises, he is led to show us wherein they are critical; in order to give to emotion full expression, he must make it significant. Rather it is this significance which first caught his attention, which gave him the conception of his play and guided his realization. If his dramatic movement halts or lapses, the reason may lie deeper than technic in uncertainty of intention; and if on the other hand he is able to sustain it and carry it through, the fundamental reason is that his conception of its issue is strong and clear. For dramatic movement is essentially movement to a clear issue. The *katastrophe* determines the play.

V. DRAMATIC DICTION

That drama as representation appeals primarily to the eye does not warrant neglect of its appeal to the ear. All dramas except film-plays, pantomimes, and some few pageants are not only acted; they are spoken; and even pageantry has its distinct effects of diction. Since a play is to be heard as well as seen, and since its words are for the ear alone, not, as those of the printed page, for the eye, dramatic diction is peculiarly oral. It is gauged to the ear. It does not, as stories do, seek to suggest visual images. All that field is covered by the actual representation before our eyes. What the words of a play express is sometimes information and always mood, emotion, character. A play has lines as well as action in order that emotion and character may be not only seen, but heard. Thus dramatic diction is an especially direct form of personal expression.

Dramatic diction is direct because it is directed. Conversational it is of course, in order to sustain the illusion of our overhearing actual talk; but it cannot be conversa-

tional in the sense of being diffuse, desultory, inconsequential. The illusion is kept, most commonly to-day, by making the lines short. A modern play is chary of long speeches. Single sentences and short sentence-groups further interaction (page 234) and prevent lagging of attention. But good dramatic lines are often short because they are terse. Every word counts. Every sentence is significant by its immediate emotion or by its forecast. Dramatic diction is constantly animated and often highly charged. Nothing, of course, could be further from the diffuse, circuitous, even the interrupted and confused, course of actual conversation. Gratiano in the *Merchant of Venice* seems a babbler; but he has not many lines. Juliet's nurse seems incoherent; but she does not delay the play. Dramatic dialogue imitates conversation only by its sound. It may sound either interrupted or leisurely according to mood and character. Its rhythms may be broken or incoherent with emotion. But its sense is always and immediately lucid. However animated the talk, however many persons join, there can never be confusion. The result at any moment is quite clear; and we are always moving on. For drama is far less tolerant than story or essay or speech of redundancy. Actors are impatient of what they call a "talky" play. Every word must be significant. What sounds like talk has been pared down as actual talk never can be. Drama so manipulates the forms of conversation as to achieve that movement which in all imaginative composition is essential to vividness (page 179), a series of significances uninterrupted by insignificances. Dramatic diction is the realization of this movement for the ear.

The pace of a given speech is determined by its mood (page 187). Such adaptation of pace, sought no less in other forms of imaginative composition, is in drama enhanced by the elocution of the actor; but, without waiting

for the inevitable changes of rehearsal, a playwright should test it by reading his lines aloud. How much the connotation of sentence movement counts in the total dramatic effect can be shown by analyzing any passage of distinct emotion. Toward the close of the first act of William Vaughan Moody's *Great Divide* is a passage whose meaning may be conveyed as follows:

Though I ought to take my life, ought to die, and have a right to die, I cannot. I love my life so that I must live. Even in torment and darkness I want my life; and I will have it.

But for the intensity of the situation this is quite too deliberate. The sentence movement of the actual lines keeps pace with the motion.

GHENT

And how about your life?

RUTH

I tried to do it.

GHENT

To do what?

RUTH

To take my life. I ought to die. I have a right to die. But I cannot, I cannot! I love my life; I must live. In torment, in darkness — it doesn't matter. I want my life. I will have it!

The shaping of sound to mood, of movement to emotion, has been carried in the best dramatic diction to the largest and to the finest effects of rhythm and cadence, giving to the representation an accompaniment of suggestion. The heights of this art are in dramatic verse. Good dramatic verse,¹ to say nothing of the best, is not a lyrical addition, not a decoration, but as truly a dramatic means as the other

¹ This paragraph and the two following are adapted from the author's *Note on the History Play*, in *Shakesperian Studies* edited by Brander Matthews and Ashley Horace Thorndike, New York, Columbia University Press, 1916, page 306.

means of characterization. Shakspeare's verse control has been sufficiently praised for range and freedom. His secure freedom should be interpreted not merely as variety, but as dramatic adaptation. Within the bounds of a single meter he enhanced rhythmically the quarrel of Brutus and Cassius,¹ Lear's summons to Regan,² the sudden agony of Othello's doubt,³ and Macbeth⁴ sinking under his sin. To know how far verse can be dramatic one need only hear Shakspeare from a great actor. The desire of the men and women of the stage to play Shakspeare is something more than ambition for traditional star parts or for sword and cloak; it is the artist's instinct for lines that liberate all his dramatic powers.

To what lengths Shakspeare used this resource is seen in *Othello*, perhaps the extreme instance of verse used dramatically. That metrical audacity, which has left pedagogues counting syllables in vain and sharpened the critical scrutiny of the text, is the delight of actors. They feel in these shifting rhythms an emotional expression as direct and physical as gesture. Read so, the brawl manipulated to Cassio's disgrace — and the instance is not exceptional — has rhythmical effects almost separately dramatic. Iago's rapid instructions to Roderigo, his fomenting of the fight, the dignity of Othello's anger, are hardly more remarkable in action and in structural placing than in tempo and phrasing.

Iago. (*Aside to Roderigo*) Away, I say; go out, and cry a mutiny.

Exit Roderigo.

Nay, good lieutenant, — God's will, gentlemen; —

Help, ho! — Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, — sir; —

Help, masters! — Here's a goodly watch indeed!

Bell Rings.

¹ *Julius Caesar*, IV. iii. 35. ² *Lear*, II. iv. 89. ³ *Othello*, III. iii. 90, quoted below. ⁴ *Macbeth*, V. v. 9-29.

Who's that which rings the bell? — Diablo, ho!
The town will rise. God's will, lieutenant, hold!
You will be sham'd for ever.

Re-enter Othello and Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?

Mon. 'Zounds, I bleed still; I am hurt to the death.

He dies.

Oth. Hold, for your lives!

Iago. Hold ho! Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, — gentlemen, —
Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?
Hold! the general speaks to you; hold, for shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?
Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that
Which Heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?
For Christian shame put by this barbarous brawl.
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion.
Silence that dreadful bell; it frights the isle
From her propriety. What is the matter, masters?
Honest Iago, that looks dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? On thy love, I charge thee.¹

Shakspeare's accommodation of dramatic rhythms to metrical pattern is represented, more typically than in the extreme case of *Othello*, by *Lear* and *Macbeth*. The meter of *Lear*, though distinctly more reserved, is played no less dramatically. The verses spoken by the king, finely differentiated throughout for character, carry to its full dramatic height his outbursts of passion, as in his summons to Regan.² The rhythms rise and fall with the mood, breaking and stammering, subsiding to the normal beat, quivering again. So few instances can exhibit only the effects most obviously

¹ *Othello*, II. iii. 157-178.

² *Lear*, II. iv. 89-122.

dramatic. To the attentive ear the finer and more pervasive adaptations are no less suggestive.

In enhancing emotion the suggestion of sentence movement may also enhance characterization. It has often been remarked that inferior plays make their persons too much alike in speech; and it is equally obvious that certain broader effects of characterization are most readily conveyed by a local or professional habit of speech, such as rustic dialect or slang or professional conventionalities. In fact, typical farmers, sailors, street urchins, parsons, doctors, etc., each with an appropriate lingo, are known on the stage as character parts. More personal habits of speech are indicated, especially in the caricature of farce, by the recurrence of pet phrases and other mannerisms. Such adaptations of diction are but of the simplest and broadest. Finer and more pervasive are the suggestions of character that come from sentence movement. By the run of their sentences, as well as by their choice of words, children are differentiated from their elders, fine ladies from shop-girls, scholars from day-laborers; and this is one of the best ways to avoid monotony, which is after all an effect mainly of sound. Synge's suggestions of Irish peasantry are conveyed no more by a strange raciness of diction than by a novel speech-tune. Sentence movement even helps to characterize individuals. Charles Surface's sentences are like him, simple and straightforward.

'Fore heaven, 'tis true! There's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintances have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't, they won't drink. . . .

Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad, I am never so successful as when I am a little merry. Let me throw on a bottle of champagne, and I never lose.

— *The School for Scandal*, III, iii.

The tempo of Joseph Surface's lines, like his choice of words, is more self-conscious.

LADY SNEERWELL

Poor Charles!

JOSEPH SURFACE

True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one can't help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves —

LADY SNEERWELL

O Lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

JOSEPH SURFACE

Egad, that's true! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding. — *The School for Scandal*, I, i.

Such differentiation by characteristic speech-tune underlies some of the finer effects of Shakspeare. The sentence movement of Antony is simpler and more varied than the terse and somewhat labored balance of Brutus.

BRUTUS

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear; believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe; censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I lov'd Caesar less, but that I lov'd Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all freemen? As Caesar lov'd me, I weep for

him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

— *Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 13–38.

ANTONY

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!
 I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
 The evil that men do lives after them;
 The good is oft interred with their bones.
 So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
 Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.
 If it were so, it was a grievous fault;
 And grievously hath Caesar answered it.
 Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest —
 For Brutus is an honourable man;
 So are they all, all honourable men —
 Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
 He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
 But Brutus says he was ambitious,
 And Brutus is an honourable man.

— *Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 78–92.

This variety of rhythms within a single meter stands out in contrast to the indistinguishable uniformity of the speech in some other historical dramas, for instance Addison's *Cato*. The periodic form of the following passage chimes with Antonio's deliberative dignity.

Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
 By taking nor by giving of excess,
 Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
 I'll break a custom.

— *The Merchant of Venice*, I. iii. 62.

The rhythms of Shylock, equally dignified, are different because they too are characteristic. The famous passage beginning "Signior Antonio, many a time and oft" (III. ii. 107), heard from a great actor, is felt to be characteristic in its very sound.

In all this there is no implication of deliberate attempt to compose in certain measures. That is inconceivably absurd. Playwriting, like all other writing, is expressing thought and emotion, not "fiddling harmonics." A playwright can harmonize the movement of his lines with the emotion and the character only by being possessed with that emotion and living in that character by imaginative insight. Analysis merely reveals how the creative impulse has worked; it does not provide a means of making oneself creative. But it does provide a means of revision. Like all other matters of detail, the lines of a play usually need revision. Indeed, in skilful playwriting the words and sentences are likely to be left tentative longer than in any other form of composition. To settle the lines before settling the action is a common amateur error. And since words and sentences belong less to composition than to revision, there is the greater opportunity for careful adjustment. In thus trying to make what is said carry more and more of what is meant and felt we must not trust to the eye alone; we need revision by ear.

APPENDIX A

ASSIGNMENTS

The following assignments are meant rather to suggest direction and method than to stress certain topics.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER I, INFORMATION

1. *Object*

Since the aim is so to present real information as to hold the attention of an audience and to win comprehension, such topics must be suggested and elicited as will make this worth while not merely as an exercise, but as an achievement. The aim being to achieve a certain result, not to conform to a certain type, the assignments, though always definite, should be promotive, not restrictive. Argument need not be ruled out; for some students it helps focus and consecutiveness by providing motive and interest. Description is often necessary and usually desirable. But though there need be no restriction to "pure exposition," both argument and description must for the time be subordinated to the main task of making people understand. To this end the first essential is that the information be real and trustworthy; the next, that it be so organized as to be followed easily. The first practically demands investigation. Though topics need not all, or altogether, depend on reading, they will for full value and interest involve reading, and they should progressively expand ability in research. Relations to college courses or to other

actual interests should be brought out in the regular conferences with individuals which are an essential provision for effective teaching.

2. *Length*

The first assignment had better be not less than 600 words; and in general the assignments should be longer and longer up to at least 1200 words. Individual students will readily learn to sustain an account of 2000 words. The longer the assignment, the longer the preparation; i.e., for a class or for an individual, the longer, the fewer. Thus there may be set for a given period rather a minimum total of words than a fixed number of articles. A particular student may gain more by exploring a topic further while his neighbor proceeds to another, both writing in a given time about the same number of words. But, this leeway granted, each single assignment should be definite as to space or time. Whether the subject is pursued afterward or not, the task of the moment should be adjusted to 800 words, or 1000, or 1200. Otherwise there will be no sufficient gauge of its proportions. Generally also a few long themes, while they give all the practise in detail proposed by frequent short exercises, yield values more proper to college study and more interesting to college students.

3. *Class Work*

(a) *Topics.* The first task in class, first in time, and first in importance, is to make the assignment clear and suggestive, to show: (1) the aim, what is to be attempted and why; and (2) the method, by expansion of the directions in Chapter I and by application of these to particular proposals of topics. Typically fruitful topics should be discussed and proposals sounded as to their promise of yielding available information and human interest. Is

this topic still alive for actual hearers and readers? What aspects of it interest you especially? Where will you find your facts?

(b) *Notes, Outlines, Oral Development.* So soon as investigation is in progress, notes may be brought to class, controlled quickly by a glance here and there, compared through brief preliminary oral reports, and summed up at the end of the hour for general guidance. The investigation of the topics actually in hand will provide all the necessary practise in the use of the library. Outline for division and definition, i.e., for sorting and grouping the notes, is worth little to the class as a class. What is worth much is outline for presentation, i.e., consecutive plan by paragraphs. At this point, therefore, the whole class will gain by oral presentation of some topics entire in preliminary draft, and of others in part with indication of the whole plan. Thus the composer and the class alike will most readily gain a sense of reality, immediacy, and adaptation in general, and of the sufficiency or interest of particular parts. The speaker should not explain how he proposes to treat his subject (that has been done at the beginning); he should actually treat it consecutively as he proposes to write it, but without writing it first (see pages 136-140). The class discussion of his address should be directed, not yet to sentences and words, but to subject-matter and clearness of arrangement. The leading questions are: (1) What did he say? i.e., what did he bring out? (2) By what stages? (3) What changes in order or proportion should he make in writing?

Study of models at this point cannot demand much time, and is not very important. Reading for facts should not be deviated and confused by miscellaneous use of periodicals for digest and analysis. Focus on the main thing.

(c) *Revision.* After the article has been written, and

more readily after it has been criticized individually, profitable class review of technic may proceed: (1) by a student's explaining what changes are proposed for revision, and why; and (2) occasionally by actual revision in class along lines indicated in the criticism. For convenience of reference, all the technic of revision is grouped in Chapter II; but some of it is available in connection with the assignments of Chapter I. Rewriting is profitable for class discussion only in so far as it involves recasting. Mere rehearsal of corrections in detail is tedious, and for other reasons it should be thrown upon the individual. Even for him correction should be rather a requirement *before* the manuscript is submitted, whereas recasting may be always both interesting and profitable.

(d) *Groups and Series.* In some cases several students may well combine to cover a single larger topic (e.g. (1) The Port of New York, (2) The Kentucky Frontier, (3) The '49 in California) by taking each some part or aspect (e.g., (1) The New Piers, The Terminal Railroad; (2) Daniel Boone as a Frontier Type, The Life of a Woman on the Kentucky Frontier in —; etc.) Similarly a single student may sometimes carry one of these larger topics through a series of articles, each covering some part or phase. In both these cases of combination there should be care to revise the whole as a whole, to fit the parts into some general scheme. Though this should be forecast in advance, it always demands reshaping afterwards.

4. *Specimen Assignments*

Avoid assignments, such as the explaining of a process of manufacture or the chronological summary of a career, which invite mere enumeration in an order fixed by the source. Every assignment should demand independent organization and the use of more than one source. Only

thus will a student come to realize his own interests and to focus his thought and expression.

(a) *First Assignment.* A fruitful general suggestion for a first theme, before the instructor has had opportunity to know the students individually, is: *Give in five to seven paragraphs (600-750 words) a clear and interesting account of some organization with which you are familiar; e.g., Girl Scouts, The Fatherless Children of France, A Local Red Cross Center, The Grange, The Consumers' League, The Drama League, The Community Theater, The Work of the Y. M. C. A. in Military Camps, The Naval Militia.*

(b) *Assignments on Occupations.* Another general suggestion is of the opportunities and demands of a particular occupation; e.g., architecture as a career for women, school-teaching as a career for men, the new requirements in the School of Engineering and what they signify, what industrial chemistry is, laboratory positions in the Board of Health, dairy farming, a country parson to-day, the difference between a "business college" and a "school of commerce," the lawyer as an adviser in business, what are the prerequisites for secretarial positions, a hospital nurse, etc. Such investigations may help a student to determine his bent betimes, and in some cases to test his vocation. Meantime they are interesting to the whole class.

(c) *Assignments Requiring both Observation and Reading.* Many topics are valuable as opening both observation and reading in a field where the student has already some interest and perhaps some information. Such topics can be both seen and read, investigated both on the spot and in print. The following are grouped roughly as available primarily (1) in the larger centers of population, (2) in the smaller centers.

(1) The Model Tenements on — Street, the New "Gary" School at —, The — Method for Crippled Children, The Bureau of Chari-

ties, The Subway System (typical of a theme developed by several students undertaking (a) train schedules and service in relation to population, (b) wage scale and hours of work, (c) office management, (d) relations to the city government, etc.), The Children's Court, The Altman Collection of Paintings, A Department Store School for Employees, What is a Police Commissioner? Cooper Union, The Musical Art Society, The Home Defense League, Fire Laws for Factories, The Management of Public Parks, The Italian Colony in — Street, A Local Exemption Board, Voluntary Censorship of Film Plays, A Municipal Lodging-house.

(2) Growing Beets for Sugar, Bee-keeping as a Business, Drill-planting and Furrow-planting of Corn, Recent Experiments with Shade-grown Tobacco, The Model Dairy Farm at —, Traction Cultivators, Lumbering in Oregon, The Water Supply of —, Workmen's Houses of the — Company, The New Barracks at —, Farm Labor in Southern Illinois, "Wet" and "Dry" in My County, The Librarian in a Small Town, The — Light and Power Company, The State Constabulary, An Indian Reservation, Whaling Old and New, Copper-mining in —, Reserve Officers' Training Camps, The Management of a Summer Hotel, Sail and Steam in the Atlantic Coasting Trade, The Work of a Forest Warden, A Labor Union "Local," Observations for the Weather Bureau, The New Railroad Bridge at —.

(d) *Assignments Specifically Related to Other Courses.* Some relation to other courses is so vital as to be practically necessary. The degree of relation, however, the extent, and the method must vary from college to college. Though it may be facilitated by seeing each student's schedule, or by grouping students according to their major interests, effective relation demands careful planning in advance and definite knowledge both of the methods of other departments and of their ideals for students' writing. Obviously some studies offer better opportunities than others. Elementary courses in language, for instance, give no opening for assignments demanding the presentation of information, though for other purposes of composition they may be helpful. Freshman mathematics, again, is generally too abstract and formulaic to be available, and so is much of

the elementary work in chemistry and physics. The individual student may present a certain type of airplane, turbine, submarine, gas engine, or dehydration; but he should be held to explain it, to make its principle and its application intelligible, not merely to write *about* it. Such topics, too, remind us that immediately available material is to be sought rather in applied science. Thus students in schools of technology have an initial advantage. Among the pure sciences botany and geology seem to suggest most readily those human relations which are vital for interest in presentation. A leading question for oral or written report is, What point in all your college courses stands out this week as something that you would especially like to investigate further? What do you see in it? What is its especial significance to you?

By its human interest history is especially adaptable. It has the further advantages of being largely elected in freshman year and of having in the best secondary schools opened the idea of research. Best of all, its material, though partly digested and readily available, no less readily opens collation. The assignment, however, should be carefully limited, should preclude chronological digest, and should suggest possibilities of concreteness; e.g., A Medieval Town, Monastery, Guild, or Cathedral, The Issues in the Contest over Investitures, Queen Anne Coffee-houses, The Significance of the Battle of Saratoga, The *Coueurs de Bois*, The Armada.

Economics and politics, though obviously most useful for extensive work in argument, are available also for exposition to a few freshmen each year in such topics as: Profit-sharing in the — Company, The Minimum Wage in New Zealand, The State Employment Bureau, The Working of the Direct Primary in —, Government Control of Food in —, The Platform of the — Party, The

Interstate Commerce Commission, Hours and Wages in the — Industry, Our Naturalization Laws, The Trend of Immigration from 1910 to 1914.

The fine arts, since they suggest rather discussion and criticism than presentation of facts, are more available later; but meantime they should not be denied to the right student.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER II, DISCUSSION

Since the presentation of information merges naturally into discussion, the topics for Chapter I are available also for Chapter II; and conversely the technic reviewed in the latter becomes increasingly important for the tasks of the former as those tasks expand. Students had better read Chapter II, therefore, while they are still engaged upon assignments demanding primarily the presentation of information. These assignments, especially where they run into longer articles, series, or groups (e.g., on the interests of Japan in China, or of Italy in the Balkans, or on the Americanization of immigrants), will involve more and more discussion. Discussion may arise even earlier from simpler and shorter assignments; e.g., an article on a series of popular concerts may provoke a discussion on how to hear music, or another on the musical taste of a San Francisco crowd; explanation of the work of a forest warden may suggest discussion of the possibilities of forestry as a career. In a word, the two chapters may be applied both separately and together.

As increasing stress on interpretation, on bringing up underlying ideas, calls for review of technic, there should be corresponding stress on revision for definiteness of form and for both precision and vividness of style. The class

work should include specific analysis of practicable models, i.e., analysis of the particular means (paragraph emphasis, concrete language, etc.) of achieving exactly what the student is trying to do. Such study should not be mere admiration of classics; it should be made immediately contributory by choosing modern, even current models, by showing in each case that the theme embraces both the object and the audience, by defining the paragraph stages (page 42), and by examining the process of exposition in detail. The use of a single periodical through an extended period will hardly be worth the time it costs unless the selection and analysis are directed with the greatest care. In general, there will hardly be time for a reading course; and a few models, even two or three, will serve practical purposes about as well as many.

For further relation to other courses the leading question now is, What new or leading idea has emerged this week from all your college studies as especially significant? Is the significance limited to the field of one course, or does it focus more than one study? Ideas from courses in literature (not only English literature) and the other arts become more available in such topics as The Significance of the Greek Play in the Stadium, The Modern Construction of Shakspeare's *Othello*, Ballad Habits in the *Ancient Mariner*, The Poems of —, Wagner's Conception of Opera, Descriptive Music and the Descriptive Program, Folk Music, The Revival of Tapestry. Assignments in history may seek more interpretation, as in Survival of Feudal Ideas as to the Position of Women, Trade Guilds and Labor Unions, The Church as an International Institution, The Friars as a Revival Movement. Such assignments are especially for ambitious students not pursuing a vocational course.

The types of essay summarized in Chapter II (pages 86-92) are only types, not distinct literary forms. As

forms some of these essays are antiquated. Moreover the essay, however generously we expand the term, has rarely been popular and has usually been the product of maturity, not of youth. As an assignment for college students, especially for freshmen, it often has the disadvantage of unreality. Essay-writing in college may be good exercise for bringing other courses to bear, for promoting appreciation, for defining and enhancing notions of literary excellence, and, in the more discursive, descriptive form of the familiar essay, for promoting freedom and fluency of expression; but its other values are not sufficient to warrant assigning it as a main reliance for a whole class. The same objection lies against the use of a magazine for class analysis through any long period. More widely available forms of discussion are the newspaper supplement article and editorial.

The most vital and adaptable form of written discussion to-day is the editorial. The range of the editorial from information to persuasion is exhibited this morning (August 7, 1917) as I write. The leading editorial in one New York paper explains Mr. Kerensky's position and the composition of his cabinet by a survey of political tendencies and exigencies in Russia. It gives no space to argument, much to information, most to interpretation. The next paper that I read gives its whole editorial space to a single editorial, of about the same length, entirely argumentative, on the advisability of stating terms of peace. The former is composed in comparatively few, and hence rather long, paragraphs; i.e., its information is interpreted by a few leading ideas. The latter is composed in very short paragraphs; i.e., it proceeds by short steps; and this bringing out of items separately is enhanced by simpler language, larger type, and in some cases by deliberately splitting paragraphs. Though it thus gives a first impression of many reasons, the latter editorial is more than an enumera-

tion; the order of points is carefully designed to lead on to the conclusion. Both these editorials run beyond the usual length. As strongly marked instances, each of a single direction, they show how freely the form may be adapted, not only by choice of words, but by proportions of information, interpretation, and argument. The editorial at once opens variety and compels adaptation.

Both the editorials just mentioned are too nearly supplement articles to be fully effective as editorials. A half-column is at once a more typical length and better as a college assignment; for one of its chief lessons is conciseness, and it furnishes a kind of practise more sharply distinct from that of the assignments for Chapter I. The peculiar values of the editorial are best realized through writing it, as it is written in newspaper offices, immediately and quickly. It is a typically good assignment for impromptu writing in class. But though it is naturally impromptu, it cannot be unprepared. The writer must know what he is talking about, or he will cultivate little beyond shallow glibness. Therefore the topics are limited practically to three: (1) a topic of public concern which the writer has followed in news reports enough for real knowledge of the facts and their bearings; (2) a college or other local topic involving facts familiar to the community; and (3) the topic of the longer assignment then in hand. Of these the most generally available is (3); and this is the more useful if the topic is one of a series or group, since then the writer has opportunity for more extensive knowledge and perhaps for several editorials on as many aspects. To express quickly, cogently, and briefly the significance of facts that are also being handled in full exposition is a practise that improves both forms.

Analysis of carefully selected editorials will show that conciseness is not incompatible with concreteness. Con-

ciseness that is gained by bareness ceases to be a virtue. Rather the student will learn that wise limitation consists, not in reducing many points to a summary, but in focusing on the few points, perhaps the single point, that he can in that space bring home. What he cannot handle concretely he cannot really handle at all. Analysis of good examples will show further that prime importance attaches to salience, to making the main things stand out, and that salience depends much on clinching the end of the paragraph (page 51). Further analysis, if there is time, may well bring out by comparison the variety possible in method and in tone, and the specific means of adaptation to the habitual readers of a given paper. Study of the editorial page of a single paper for at least a fortnight will show the importance of steady policy, of making each day's editorials count consecutively, as the successive speeches in a debate build up a case.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER III, §1, ARGUMENT

1. *Object*

Argument is studied to promote (1) keenness and alertness, indeed, but much more (2) habits of sound reasoning from sound evidence, and most of all (3) discernment of large underlying relations. It should never, except for the temporary purposes of analysis, be separated from persuasion. The ultimate object of every real argument is to bring knowledge to bear on people, to win assent, to contribute to the spread of truth.

2. *Conditions*

A course in argument, whether long and independent or short and contributory, yields most when it (1) is both

oral and written, and (2) gives time for thorough preparation. Even as one part of the freshman course — and it should be a part of every freshman course — argument should include debate and should not handle more topics than can be really investigated in the time. In college conditions the minimum time for any real control of a real subject is a month; and full realization of the educational values suggests for a freshman rather two months. Argument should proceed in part orally, not only for the reasons shown in § 3 (b) of assignments in connection with Chapter I, but further because it is essentially social. Men usually argue together and find truth through conflict. Written argument emerges from oral discussion more real and vital than that which is excogitated in solitude. Pedagogically, moreover, argument gives the best of all opportunities for class work. Cooperation, besides being natural to research into public questions, stimulates the individual by responsibility; and competition adds zest to the searching challenges of rebuttal. Ideally, then, the whole roomful should be engaged simultaneously on a single proposition, and should stay by it till it has been threshed out. Cooperation makes possible by division of labor more extensive and thorough research than could be asked of a student working alone. Nor does it preclude for any one, if the assignments are well gauged, the necessity of knowing the whole field. Every fact, every inference, that he finally decides to be vital he will have time and opportunity to verify or test for himself. Indeed, his final “brief” is by this plan usually the more extensive, since it includes material that he might by himself have overlooked. What is true for a roomful is equally true, of course, for such a smaller group — ten or twelve — as may in some cases be more practicable.

3. *Method*

The method elaborated in the next section is adaptable to various class conditions. Probably few freshman courses can follow it in every detail, and the detail is given merely for clearness; but it has been thoroughly tested by several years' experience in the teaching of argument as part, roughly the third quarter, of a freshman course. The essential stages are as follows:

(a) *announcement of a common topic* for discussion (not yet a proposition) known to be of large interest and known to contain a debatable proposition, i.e., a proposition still in dispute and not too heavily weighted on one side;

(b) *oral and written reports* (five minutes), mainly of information, on distinct points shown to be relevant, with submission of card notes and the beginnings of a bibliography, i.e., a list of books and articles tested for their value as sources (each bibliographical card should contain a brief indication (1) of what the book mainly supplies and (2) of what is the author's right to be heard.);

(c) *oral and written review* of the preliminary material, to forecast emerging issues and suggest a proposition;

(d) *the proposition* propounded in various forms and settled in the form that seems to divide most squarely and most deeply;

(e) *informal debates* (five-minute speeches) followed by oral summaries of issues, written reviews (400-500 words), and short "briefs," the common bibliography meantime revised and increased and the individual student's notes controlled from time to time;

(f) *practice in rebuttal*, with re-defining of issues;

(g) *organized debates* managed by a student captain on each side and planned to fit each speech (ten minutes) into a consecutive case;

(h) *a final exhaustive "brief"* for either side, with complete list of all sources used and with marginal citation of volume and page in each case. As a preface to the "brief" proper there should be a purely expository statement of facts and a concise summary of what each student finds to be the main issues.

Throughout all these stages each student has been reading for facts, accumulating and revising his own notes, contributing to the growing common bibliography, and sketching and revising his own brief.

4. *Specimen Calendar*

First Week. Announcement of the topic, *our international policy as affected by our interests in Latin America*. Oral reports (five minutes, some afterwards written): Our Commerce with Brazil, The Venezuela Protest, The Pan-American Union, Differences between the Northern and the Southern Countries of South America, The Monroe Doctrine, Are the Latin-American Governments Really Republics? Intervention in San Domingo, etc., etc. Each address must focus on some interest of ours. The field of investigation as it is progressively defined may be divided for the next series of reports, each student taking one country, phase, or aspect. Though argument is not excluded, the constant main object is to put before the class pertinent information. The merit of a report is immediately tested by its usefulness to the class.

Second Week. Focusing of these and other reports. Have we an international policy? What are our interests in Latin America? What should they be? Why? What is the Monroe Doctrine? Is it only a vague tradition, or does it involve a settled principle? Oral and written summaries and forecasts. The proposition, *The United States should maintain the Monroe Doctrine*.

Third and Fourth Weeks. Informal debates, each with a closing speech devoted entirely to reviewing and bringing out the largest considerations. Oral discussion of the issues. Written reviews and proposals for more vital debate on either side.

Fifth Week. Oral and written rebuttals of strongest arguments, each finally related to some issue. This needs separate practise and specific instruction. (See page 143.) For instance, it is maintained on the negative that the Monroe Doctrine is based on a theory of isolation no longer tenable. A rebuts by urging that our isolation is still effective as against European attack

and European alliances, and that the American continents are still separated from Europe by fundamental differences in political ideals. B rebuts the same argument by admitting that we are no longer isolated, and contending that for this very reason we need to maintain the Monroe Doctrine as a defensive policy. C rebuts the same argument by urging that such delimitation of spheres of influence as is proclaimed by the Monroe Doctrine is vital to the peace of the world, and that the lack of it opens such dangers of war as are seen in the Balkans and in China. Which of these lines of rebuttal is the strongest? Of course, the one chosen later for organized debate must conform to the whole case; but meantime the testing of rebuttals by comparison will directly promote discernment of what the whole case should be.

Sixth and Seventh Weeks. Two organized debates according to some adaptation of intercollegiate rules. The main objects are to construct a coherent case and to maintain, reestablish, or revise it. Two consecutive hours, if they can be arranged, should supplant for the time the regular single recitation hours. An organized, consecutive debate can hardly be developed in less than an hour and a half; and there should be time to hand down a decision with criticism and advice. In order to reach every student, it may be necessary to divide the class into squads, and perhaps advisable also to relieve the captain from speaking, to appoint a bibliographer for each squad, and to have each part assigned to two students, of whom one is to make the longer argument, the other the rejoinder in the same field, and either to be ready for either task. In the second debate, which is always desired and always better than the first, the assignments can be shifted. Such temporary readjustment of the college schedule, even if complicated and difficult, is worth more than it costs. General directions are given in the section on debate (pages 140-147); and further suggestions will be found in the *Educational Review* for December, 1911, "Intercollegiate Debate."

Eighth Week. Final "brief." The full value of this sort of analysis is realized best after extensive oral discussion; and the "brief" is not effective as an outline to speak from (see pages 134-135).

5. *Further Assignments for Writing*

Further assignments for writing in this field may well take their cue from the newspaper in order to insure adaptation. The written "forensic" covering the whole question is often a dry enumeration of the points of the "brief" because it is addressed to no one in particular, is not written to be really read. Better assignments are supplement articles and editorials, the one extensive and largely expository, the other intensive and often urgently persuasive, both addressed directly to the public. A supplement article should be on some part or phase of the subject, not on the whole, should be controlled by a single main idea, and should be abundantly concrete. The editorial is the most generally effective form of written argument, and is the more instructive as a model when it is gauged to immediate persuasion. It should be studied in examples chosen generally for consecutiveness and concreteness, but exhibiting considerable variety in tone and method. Comparison of the morning's leading editorials on a common topic disputed at the time may be made specific as to methods of persuasion.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER IV, DESCRIPTION

Assignments in description should be short (150-300 words, with the norm about 200) and frequent, at least three a week, better daily. Extended description, especially at first, too readily lapses into inferior exposition or inferior story, and meantime obscures the essential values. From the beginning students should be not only permitted, but urged to describe by narrating.

The values of this kind of writing may be profitably sought in the order of Chapter IV: (1) realization by physical

sensations, (2) interpretation, or significance, (3) movement. At first, when the main effort is for the primary essential, concrete expression, the form of the whole will be sufficiently guided by the intention to leave a single impression. This may be emphasized at need by saying: "Decide what your last sentence is to be before you write your first." No other consideration of form is really vital at the start. Students will do better at first—and afterward too—with people than with things, with motion, gesture, sound than with still life.

When a habit of concrete expression is fairly begun, the next stage, unity of impression, is promoted by seeking critical situations, moments in which characteristic details are thickest or actions come to a head. Obvious instances are the last five minutes at the glove counter just before the store closes, the opening of college morning chapel, the final taking of the vote at a stormy meeting, the noon rush in a down-town restaurant. Negatively the counsel is to limit the time and place; positively it is to be on the look-out for eloquent moments. This is one of the best ways to discover stories of greater length. Meantime it teaches the second essential of imaginative composition, intensity through focus.

The third stage, movement, is sufficiently detailed on pages 179-192.

Short themes of this sort may be assigned at any point in the course where there is time to pursue them consecutively enough to follow these three stages in actual writing accompanied by class study. They may in some cases be used for variety, freedom, and concreteness between such longer assignments as are suggested for Chapters I and II. So assigned, they must be sharply distinguished from these in object and method. Whether used earlier or not, frequent short descriptions should always be assigned for at

least the fortnight preceding the study of more sustained narrative. They are a natural gateway to story-writing. Meantime they will often be found worth continuing for themselves throughout a month; and achievement in them is generally far higher than in story-writing.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER V, NARRATIVE MOVEMENT

Sustained narrative movement is not to be demanded of everybody as an achievement; but it is worth while for every college student as an experience. Nothing more directly defines and enhances appreciation of literature. Therefore every freshman may well be required to write one story of about a thousand words, and individual students should have opportunity to write others. Though narrative movement should be both definitely taught and definitely attempted, there need be no demand for the invention of plots. A situation is sufficient if it gives room for the presentation of character in action; and the development of it into a story has plot enough if the action is focused and is continuous up to some definite issue. Some students may profitably work up assigned plots, historical incidents, or such summary tales as abound alike in the *exempla* of the middle age and in the newspapers of to-day. The project for a story should be announced, orally or in writing, far enough in advance to permit advice. It should never be in expository "outline," since this might hamper the narrative movement; but it should hint the successive scenes, or stages of action, and clearly indicate the climax.

Obviously the writing proposed by Chapters IV, V, and VI suggests a larger use of models than that for the preceding chapters, and a correspondingly larger use of the class hour for analysis of literature and for imitation of certain

literary processes. The correlation with literature thus opened is so extensive and various in possibilities as quite to transcend any single course. But through the choice of models for specific and immediate purposes much can be done to suggest highly interesting future studies alike in English and in other literatures. For current models, whereas newspapers are more adaptable to the purposes of Chapters I, II, and III, magazines are conversely better in connection with Chapters IV and V.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CHAPTER VI, DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

Play-writing has no place in a general freshman scheme. Nevertheless the interest in drama is already so extensive, and is spreading so rapidly, and so much specific training in production and even in composition is already given by some schools, that every freshman class contains a few students who can profitably write one-act plays. For such students the general schedule should be modified enough to let them pursue their bent. In fact, no freshman schedule should be inflexible; for the teaching of composition is very largely the teaching of individuals. Moreover, the ends proposed for the majority through story-writing will in these few cases be gained more quickly through play-writing.

APPENDIX B

THE PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPT

Manuscript easy to read is like courteous address. In both cases usage is none the less important when its grounds are merely social; for to disregard it is to risk being disregarded. But, in the case of manuscript at least, usage is also grounded in economy.

Usage expects typewriting of business letters and of manuscript for publication. Handwriting in either of these cases is now so nearly obsolete as to need for ordinary consideration quite extraordinary pains. Therefore entrance into college is a good occasion to weigh the advantages of mastering a typewriter for immediate use in college tasks as preliminary to later use in affairs. For many students typewriting can be used in ways enough, will save time enough, and will produce results enough in legibility and convenience, to make it a good investment. To say nothing of outlines and digests for one's own use, typed manuscript is preferred in many college departments and will probably become before long a college custom. Mastery is more than the ability to copy or classify; it means actual composition; but on these terms it seems increasingly worth while.

1. *Business Letters*

In business letters the importance of manuscript form and style is immediate and urgent. It is the initial means of persuasion, the first — and sometimes the last — impression of the writer. Though the composition of business

letters is too large¹ to be discussed here, and belongs rather to school than to college study, it shows so strikingly the significance of externals and the economy of certain habits that it is worth reviewing in these aspects.

(a) *Spacing*. The top and the bottom space are so gauged to the length as to frame the letter well without either crowding or disproportion. Within the letter, spacing is for salience, i.e., to make the parts stand out separately. Thus two routine rules are: (1) to give a separate line to each item in a list, and (2) to use between paragraphs twice the space used between lines. No other form of composition is more attentive to the marking of paragraphs.

(b) *Reference*. No less attention is paid to the adjusting of a paragraph, and especially of the whole letter, to its place (page 44). A business letter being usually one of a series, its opening sentences always both (1) refer to the previous correspondence and (2) announce its own subject or message. One immediate use of this habit is for filing, and business filing systems may be instructive to college students; but its larger significance is for taking hold with courteous clearness and prompt vigor. The clumsy and diffuse old "Yours of the 23d at hand, and in reply would say" is no longer tolerated. Instead, the opening is made to tell both the connection and the message at once, and usually in a single sentence.

Your obliging order of the 23rd inst. has been shipped by American Express from this office, except the band-saw *247, which should reach you by the same express in a few days from our factory at Oakville. . . .

The important charge made by the American Security League

¹ See *Effective Business Letters* by Edward Hall Gardner, New York, 1915. Forms of address, abbreviations of titles, etc., will be found in a "style" book (see the footnote to section 2 below) or large dictionary.

through your letter of August 30 was investigated by this Bureau at once with the following results. . . .

In the matter of discharging your bond to the — Company we beg to add to our advice of July 30 that an express agreement by both parties to waive judicial accounting will satisfy the Court of Probate, and consequently the Company, on both points raised in your inquiry of August 1. We therefore included a waiver clause in the release enclosed herewith. . . .

The nomination tendered through your touching and stirring letter of yesterday I must accept at once as nothing less than a charge to make this whole state sympathize with the determination of the eastern counties. . . .

The reference and announcement that are of cardinal importance for the opening of the first paragraph guide also the openings of the other paragraphs in so far as each is a stage of progress. Many letters are limited to one paragraph. In those of greater length, reference to a preceding paragraph is the less important the more nearly the letter consists of an enumeration. But since mere enumeration is often as ineffective in a letter as in an article, the best business letters of any length show in brief and striking form the value of progressive order and, for marking this, the importance of giving salience through paragraph emphasis (page 51).

(c) *Style*. Every business letter, being a study in persuasion, is a study in style. The tone of the whole, the choice of strong concrete or general abstract terms in a given sentence — such matters show style as adaptation. But they will not prevail, nor even arrive, except through the first impression of externals. The look of a letter, the ease of reading it, the courtesy and promptness of the opening sentence — these determine its reception. Usage may, indeed, be followed quite conventionally. Even so it at least shows that the writer knows the way of the world.

It may, on the other hand, be adapted so individually as to convey a distinct impression of the writer. But however followed, it is binding. Business letter-writing constitutes a course in composition as social adjustment.

(d) *Dictation*. Very generally already, and increasingly from year to year, the composition of business letters is oral; and there is no better single training in oral composition. Though this practise is not open generally to college students, it should be seized incidentally whenever it arises. It will give much the same variety as brief editorials during a period of longer assignments. Typically less amplified than oral address to the public, dictation of business letters nevertheless demands consecutiveness and directly teaches point, or focus. Thus it may serve to prepare for the dictation of articles, interviews, and editorials. All these forms are now often dictated by professional writers for the press, and revised on the stenographer's typed sheets. While he is learning written composition on the typewriter, any student with the opportunity, therefore, may vary and extend his training by dictation.

2. *Copy for the Printer*

Though the rules below apply specifically to manuscript for publication, they apply generally to all manuscript that is to be given out for any purpose whatsoever. More technical and professional rules for special purposes, together with much tabulated information about book-making, will be found in the "style" books.¹ The manu-

¹ The most comprehensive of these is *Style Book, a compilation of rules governing executive, Congressional, and departmental printing, including the Congressional Record*, Washington, Government Printing Office. The most compact is *Rules for Compositors and Readers at the University Press, Oxford*, by Horace Hart, London, 1914 (23d edition). It prescribes a few spellings not according to American use.

script form prescribed by a particular department or office must of course be followed absolutely in that case.

(a) *Paper* should have weight enough to preclude tearing or crumpling, but not enough to be bulky. Most writers and printers prefer white; but some departments and offices find a slight tint, especially buff, easier for the eyes. The prevalent size is that of a business letter sheet, $8\frac{1}{2}$ by 11 inches, which has the advantage of fitting standard files. Half-sheets are acceptable if they are not crowded. Anything smaller is a nuisance. Every sheet, however little it contains, must be of the same size. Copy should be sent flat, not folded nor rolled.

(b) *Spacing* should be generous, since clearness must be absolute. Use only one side of a sheet. Leave a wide and uniform margin at the left. Paper at any price is cheaper than compositors' time. Remember that the reader, whether in a college or a publishing office, will judge your manuscript first by its look. Make it show that you know how.

Indentation of paragraphs must be unmistakable. Printers prefer to have each sheet begin a paragraph. Quoted passages, too, are now usually set off by indentation and also by using a shorter space between lines. Thus standing out conspicuously from the context, they need no quotation marks.

In typing a play use between speeches twice the space used between lines, capitalize the speaker's name in the middle of the sheet, and underline in red, or type with a red ribbon, all stage directions.

(c) *Numbering* must be carefully consecutive. New sheets added to a manuscript of considerable length may

Other "style" books are issued by the University of Chicago Press (3d edition, 1911), by the Columbia University Printing Office (1917), and by a few large printing houses.

be numbered 7a, 7b, etc.; but in that case the preceding sheet 7 had better be marked *Followed by sheets 7a & 7b*. Conversely, where a sheet is suppressed, the following sheet should read 23 (*sheet 22 omitted*). But manuscripts of ordinary length should obviate misunderstanding by renumbering the whole. Many writers preclude mislaying by putting their initials at the left corner of each sheet.

An insert of more than a few words had better be made on a separate sheet, not crowded into the margin. It should be marked *Insert on sheet 19*, and should immediately follow that sheet. The exact place of insertion should be indicated by a conspicuous caret in the text and by a note in the margin, *Insert copy on next sheet*. This rule applies to inserts of charts, tables, or pictures. If the insert is a separate paragraph, it had better begin with a paragraph sign.

Footnotes should be numbered consecutively through the whole article or chapter. The printer can thus locate them more easily, and will attend to their final places and numbers on the page proof. A footnote is usually placed in manuscript, not at the foot of the sheet, but immediately below the passage to which it refers. It is set off by dotted lines above and below it and by shorter spaces between its lines, so that it stands out on the sheet. In the rare cases where a footnote is long, it should be written on a separate insert sheet, as above.

The first sheet of a manuscript should show: (1) at the top, the exact number of sheets and the approximate number of words, (2) the title in capitals, (3) the writer's name as it is to appear in print or to be located in a college list, (4) in the case of a fairly long manuscript submitted either to a publisher or in a college course where it is not a general assignment, a concise account (100 words) of the scope and method. Nothing else should appear on the first

sheet, except, in college courses, the name of the course and the date.

(d) *Uniformity* covers spacing, capitals, punctuation, spelling, numbers, headings, quotations, citations, and the use of terms, especially foreign and technical terms. In each of these matters one system or usage must be maintained throughout.

(e) *Proof-reading*. The conventional signs for the correction of proof may be easily learned from any large dictionary or any "style" book. The better the manuscript, the fewer corrections will be necessary in proof. Such changes as are necessary should all be made in "galley" proof; for additions or excisions in page proof may involve the resetting of several pages, or even of a whole chapter. An insert in galley proof should be made in the way shown above (§ c). It should be pasted, not pinned, to the galley sheet in such a way as not to hide the office marks.

3. *Punctuation and Capitals*

Punctuation is often made to seem so complicated that it may well be reviewed in its essentials, which are both few and clear.

(a) CONVENTIONAL RULES OF PUNCTUATION

A **period** after an *abbreviation* is still the rule; but British use shows a tendency to omit the period (Mr, Dr) after the commonest abbreviations.

A **colon** (1) stands at the end of a sentence introducing an *extended quotation*. Less often both a colon and a dash are used in this case. The quotation is indented as a paragraph and set off by single spacing. Thus distinguished, it hardly needs marks of quotation.

(2) A colon stands before such an *enumeration* of particulars as requires semicolons between the particulars.

The capital leading questions . . . are these two: first, whether you ought to concede; and, secondly, what your concession ought to be.

(3) A colon stands at the *beginning of a letter* after a salutation consisting of two or more parts.

Messrs. Black and White,
Gentlemen:

A salutation of one line (*My dear Mr. Black*) more usually has a comma, but may have a colon.

Commas (1) divide a *series* of words without conjunctions.

Barrels, boxes, and crates floated downstream.
He swerved, slipped, sprawled.

If a conjunction is used between the last two of the series, the dividing comma is retained; but the comma after the whole series is omitted.

Barrels, boxes, and crates floated downstream.

If the series is in pairs, commas separate the pairs.

Great and small, rich and poor, cultured and uncultured, rubbed elbows in that crowd.

(2) A comma is used before a *quotation* of a single sentence, which is set off, not by indentation, but by quotation marks.

It was Daniel Webster who said, "I am a Constitutional Whig "

An **exclamation point** or an **interrogation point** stands after a part or after the whole sentence according to whether the part or the whole is exclaimed or asked. In either case it supersedes any other punctuation.

Heavens! can this be true?
What? Clap him into jail!

Quotation marks are used for the *titles* of shorter works, such as single poems, or of the parts of longer works. The title of a whole book is more usually indicated in manuscript by underlining, in print by italics.

Quotations of some length are now usually set off, not by quotation marks, but by indentation and shorter line spacing. Where this is not done, a quotation with a quotation is indicated by single marks (“ ”).

Marks of **parenthesis** are no longer common, except to insert short instances.

(b) PRINCIPLES OF PUNCTUATION

Except in these few conventions, punctuation is regulated by syntax.

Thus the use of any mark but a **period** at the end of a *sentence* is an error, not of punctuation, but of grammar, a failure to distinguish a sentence from a clause, and is to be remedied accordingly.

Thus again the **dash**, since it marks a place where the *construction is broken*, i.e., either interrupted or left incomplete, can be used rarely.

The **colon**, except in the conventional uses explained above, is *obsolete*. In older prose it marked a unit midway between a sentence and a clause; in prose of to-day this unit is no longer recognized.

The **semicolon** is generally confined to separating the parts of *compound sentences*. Its use being generally to indicate that the parts between which it stands are coordinate, it hardly occurs in complex sentences. But not all compound sentences have semicolons. The semicolon is used *to separate parts which have commas within them*; or conversely, when the parts of a sentence have commas within them, these parts have a semicolon between them. The use of the semicolon is to distinguish the larger divisions

of a sentence from the smaller divisions, the coordinate parts from the subordinate parts.

If he has any evidence, let him produce it; if not, let him shut his mouth.

Where there are no commas within the parts, a comma is now generally sufficient between them; but many good writers still prefer a semicolon between the parts of all *compound sentences in which the grammatical subject of the second part is different from that of the first*. And the semicolon is generally used in those *balanced compound sentences which dispense with a conjunction*.

The power of French literature is in its prose writers; the power of English literature is in its poets.

Except in cases, like the example, where the parts clearly balance against each other to express a single idea, such sentences should be avoided. Otherwise there is danger of merely running sentences together by using semicolons instead of periods.

The **comma**, (1) in general, is omitted or inserted according as a subordinate part is grammatically necessary or not. Omit the comma between parts which are intended to be taken together as one; insert the comma between parts which are not so intended.

(2) In particular, a relative clause is or is not set off by a comma according as it is intended to be *non-restrictive* or *restrictive*. Compare these two sentences:

In this climate there is no opportunity for reading, which taxes the mind.

In this climate there is no opportunity for reading which taxes the mind.

The former means that there is no opportunity for any reading, since all reading taxes the mind; the latter, that

there is no opportunity for that kind of reading which taxes the mind, *i.e.*, for hard reading. The former sentence completes the intended sense at *reading*, the following clause being merely an added explanation; the latter sentence does not complete the intended sense until the end. In the former the *which* clause is non-restrictive; in the latter, restrictive.

(3) On the same principle, commas set off *parenthetical expressions*, *i.e.*, words, phrases, or clauses which are not necessary to complete the syntax of the sentence:

This, my friends, is the whole truth. However my opponent may storm, he cannot add one relevant fact. If he brings up the traction dispute, remember what he said about that when he was not a candidate.

This passage shows that the rule applies to adverbial clauses of condition, cause, or exception (introduced by *if*, *because*, *unless*, *though*, etc.), but not to clauses like the last (*when he was not a candidate*), which are intended restrictively.

A parenthetical expression has a comma after it, before it, or on each side, merely according to whether it stands at the beginning of the sentence, at the end, or in the midst.

(c) CAPITALS

(1) The general idea of capitals, to distinguish certain words conspicuously, is carried out in English by distinguishing not only proper nouns, but also proper adjectives. Thus *Democratic* is distinguished from *democratic*, *Catholic* from *catholic*, as the *Army* from an *army* and *Mayor Mitchel* from *mayors* in general.

French articles and prepositions forming part of a name or title are capitalized when used without the name or title preceding: *La Vallière*, *D'Aubigné*, *Du Camp*; but *Louise de la Vallière*,

Agrippa d'Aubigné, Maxime du Camp. Many famous surnames are used alone without the preposition: *Balzac* (*Honoré de Balzac*), *Saint-Pierre* (*Bernardin de Saint-Pierre*).

Van is capitalized in Dutch names; *von* is not capitalized in German names.

(2) The capitalization of *North, South, East, and West* when they refer to sections of a country is like that of common place-names when they immediately precede or follow a proper place-name: *Lake Erie, the Ohio River*.

(3) Titles of books are still commonly written with capitals for all the important words, i.e., the first word and all other words except prepositions, conjunctions, etc. (*The Advancement of Learning, A Tale of Two Cities*); but the usage of libraries and bibliographies has extended the French habit of capitalizing only the first word (*College manual of astronomy*).

(4) The capitalizing of all names of God is often extended to pronouns; but many writers follow the usage of the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer in writing these pronouns with a small letter.

(5) A sentence brought within a sentence by "direct discourse" begins with a capital.

The gentleman's speech amounts to asking, Can we afford to renominate a man who has antagonized these powerful interests? and the answer is, We cannot afford to nominate any one but the man who has won the people of this whole state.

"Indirect discourse" dispenses with capitals by reducing the included sentence to a clause.

The gentleman's speech amounts to asking whether we can afford . . . and the answer is that we cannot afford. . .

(6) By exception following older usage, formal resolutions consisting of a series of clauses begin each clause with

a capital, and also each *whereas* and *resolved* introducing it.

Whereas, This council has heard with profound regret . . . ; and

Whereas, The justice of the demands formulated has not been questioned . . . ; and

Whereas, The urgency . . . ; therefore be it

Resolved, That this council hereby . . . ; and be it further

Resolved, That . . .

Each clause is also indented as a paragraph.

For the use of capitals in abbreviations see the list of abbreviations in any large dictionary or in a "style" book.

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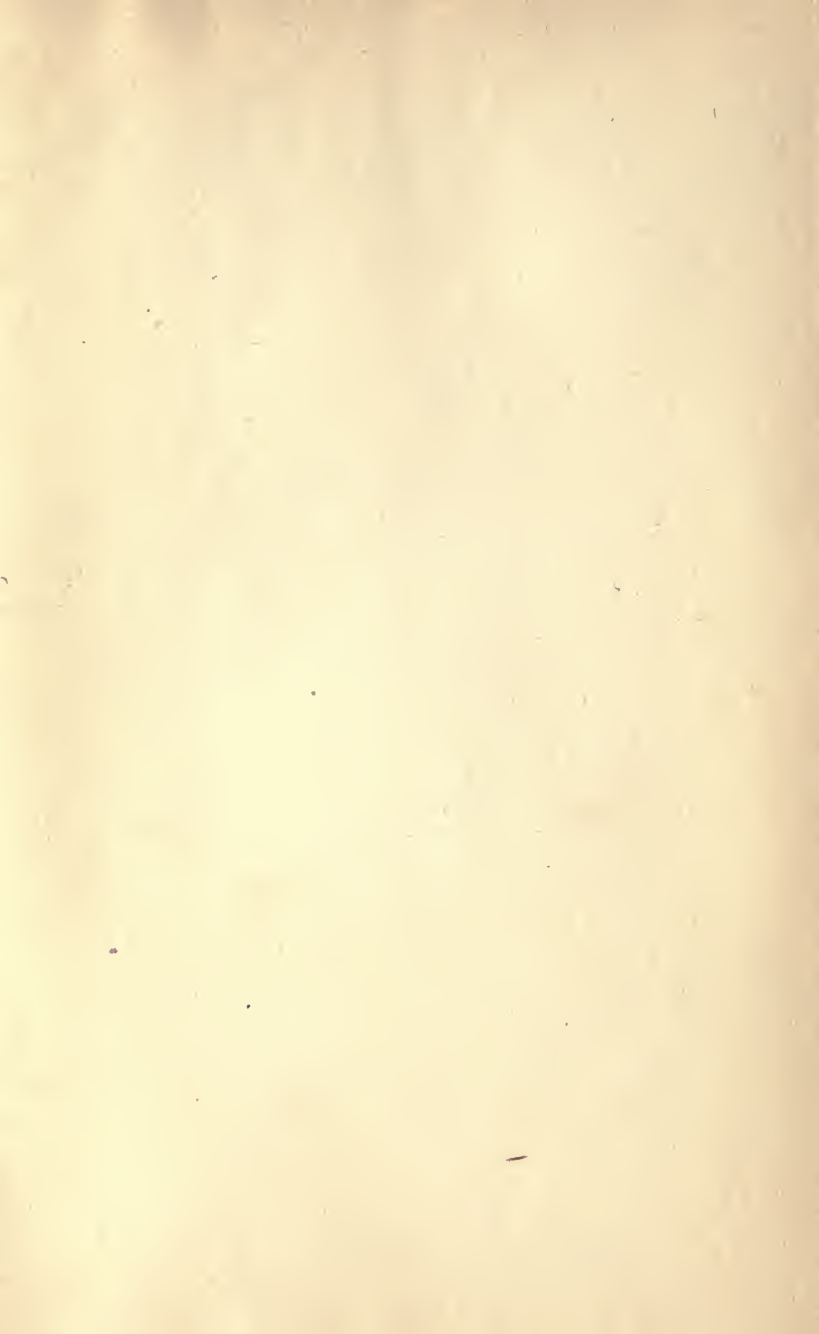
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